Buchanan football falls to defending D7 champ
Page B1

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Today's
The Herald-Palladium
included inside

Niles Star

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Niles Township celebrates new town hall

Photo provided

Niles Charter Township celebrated its new-and-improved township hall with a ribbon cutting ceremony Friday, Oct. 3.

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES CHARTER TOWNSHIP — A local township welcomed its constituents to its new facility last week.

Niles Charter Township conducted its first board of trustees meeting in its expanded and renovated township hall at 320 Bell Road Monday evening. The township hosted a ribbon-cutting and open house for its Friday, Oct. 3.

"We're finally here, we're finally home," said Township Supervisor Marge Durm-Hiatt. "All day long, people came through. It was fun. It was a good day."

The township hall had served the community since the 1960s and lacked the space and the infrastructure to meet the growing demands and needs of the community and township staff. The $2.7 million expansion adds approximately 3,100 square feet of space to the building, which provides more space for staff as well as storage space for important documents and election equipment.

The meeting room has its own entrance on the west side of the building and township services are also located on the west side.

"People are still adjusting," she said. "It's a safer place for our staff. I hope it gives people more privacy when they're talking to the assessor or zoning administrator or whichever department you're speaking to. Before, we were just crammed together and the staff didn't have privacy and neither did the residents. I think the additional space gives us a lot more safety and privacy."

While the hall was under construction, the township rented out space at the Greater Niles Senior Center, 1109 Bell Road, to conduct business. Durm-Hiatt said Senior Center staff visited the hall during the open house.

"It was so convenient and it didn't disrupt the citizens that much since it was just a block away," she said. "It was great, but I think they're happy to have it back."

See **TOWNSHIP**, page A3

Area residents sentenced to probation, jail

By DEBRA HAIGHT
For Leader Publications

NILES — A Warsaw, Indiana, man was sentenced to prison Monday in Berrien County Trial Court at the Niles courthouse, while others were sentenced to jail or probation.

Primitivo Contreras Almanza, 40, of Warsaw, Indiana, pleaded guilty to second degree home invasion and was sentenced to 24 months to 180 months in prison. He has credit for 152 days already served and must pay $308 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred May 28 in Niles Township. Almanza is in the country illegally and has an immigration hold on him.

Defense attorney Carri Briseno said that her client had had a very long period with no police contact since a drunk driving conviction in 2008.

"After that, he recognized that alcohol use was an issue in his life and he had a long term of sobriety," she said. "But he had had been drinking on the day of the offense and police said he was highly intoxicated."

She asked for a local sentence so he can address his immigration issues. She noted that his entire family lives in the United States.

A South Bend man who stole items from the Niles Rural King store was sentenced to jail.

See **COURT**, page A3

Niles man charged with felony hate crime in barbershop graffiti incident

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — A 63-year-old Niles man has been arrested in connection with a racially motivated graffiti incident at In The Cut Barbershop in Niles back in August.

Timothy McDermott, of Niles, was arrested following an extensive investigation by the Niles Police Department.

McDERMOTT

The Berrien County Prosecutor's Office has authorized charges against McDermott, including felony hate crime and misdemeanor malicious destruction of property over $200 but less than $1,000. McDermott was arraigned on Thursday, October 9, 2025, at the Fifth District Court in Niles.

See **CHARGED**, page A3

Photos by Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications

The Edwardsburg community held a spirited send-off Wednesday for the equestrian team as they head to Midland for the MIHA State Championship.

Edwardsburg community gathers to send off equestrian team to state finals

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

EDWARDSBURG — The Edwardsburg equestrian team is aiming to make history and the community is rallying behind them.

The Edwardsburg community held a spirited send-off Wednesday for the equestrian team as they head to Midland for the MIHA State Championship. The team and their horses received a police and fire escort from the Edwardsburg Sports Complex heading east into town.

"I'm really excited," said senior team member Naylee Shidler. "A little nervous, but mostly excited. We've been trying to get here."

For Naylee and junior team member Lillian Hoopingarner, seeing the community show its support means a lot.

"It's been amazing," Naylee said. They're all great people. It's really exciting because we don't normally get a lot of support. This is awesome."

"We're just so thankful that everyone can come out and do this, and we're grateful for the opportunity again,"

See **TEAM**, page A3

ST. JOSEPH

Court building to close main entrance for renovations

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

ST. JOSEPH — The Berrien County Trial Court building in St. Joseph will temporarily close its regular public entrance for renovations starting Monday, Oct. 20, according to a news release. The project is expected to last approximately two weeks.

During the renovation period, the public must use a temporary entrance located on the west side of the courthouse, just south of the regular entrance. All patrons will be required to go through the security checkpoint at this temporary location.

Signs will be posted to direct people to the new entrance and exit points both inside and outside the courthouse.

This renovation project affects only the St. Joseph courthouse; the Niles courthouse entrance remains fully operational. Separate entry and exit instructions will be provided for St. Joseph courthouse employees.

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Today's obituaries:
Kathy Banaszak
Ruth Aldridge
Michael Kohler
James Dings
Yvonne Griffin
Ashleigh Fletcher
Eleanor Fisher
Lawrence Howarth
Randy McLeod
Takura Rukuni
Ronald Gunther
Robert Clark
Anjali Gaikwad
Mary Price
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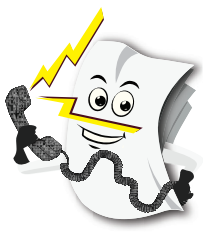
Inside today's Herald-Palladium

Automotive	C6	Focus	B1	Opinion	B6
Business	C4	Food	B7	Puzzles	B4
Comics	B5	Home & Garden	C7	Television	D3



FRANKLY

Tips and quips

Call Frankly at 269-687-7702 or email rich.cains@leaderpub.com.

■ Go Lions!

■ It's nice to see that someone is finally trying to take initiative in cleaning up the gang-bang violence in our largest cities, like Chicago. Just because crime is dropping doesn't mean it's safe enough to walk down Michigan Ave.

■ My guess is the generals and admirals were none too happy to sit and listen to our draft dodger President talk about the two "N" words.

■ Now this sex trafficker guy in Cassopolis gets a 10 year vacation away from reality on the taxpayer's money.

■ Niles football is tough!

■ Let's all pray for peace, finally, in Gaza. Wars are stupid and it only takes one or two people to end it immediately. There is so much suffering and it just has to end now.

■ I wish that just once I could drive on US Hwy 12 and not be tailgated. I think they need a few more speed limit signs to alert the crazy drivers that 75 MPH is not an acceptable speed. Sorry, but I don't drive that fast. Forgive me for following the rules.

■ Vote! If you don't like the way things are, then vote! Vote out the incumbents who want to see your healthcare triple in price. Vote out the incumbents who believe those earning the least should be getting the least help to get through day to day.

■ Illegals are NOT getting Medicaid! No undocumented immigrants are getting these services. The shutdown is an attempt to help fund healthcare for those Americans (Republicans and Democrats) who are on Affordable Care and or Medicaid and prevent their costs from doubling or tripling. End of story.

■ I don't like the idea of burning the US flag as an act of protest. But, the fact that our US Constitution allows for it as a Freedom of Speech, speaks volumes to the strength of our republic and shield of democracy we enjoy.

■ I appreciate Niles Councilman Michael Thompson for distributing his anti-tax propaganda throughout our neighborhood this weekend. Really enjoyed seeing it scattered all over the area Monday morning on our walk. Nice work Mike!

Fall in full swing at SMC

By JOHN EBY
Southwestern Michigan College

DOWAGIAC — Southwestern Michigan College Board of Trustees heard updates on academics, arts and athletics at its Oct. 8 regular meeting on the Dowagiac campus.

Interim President Brent Brewer reported on a flurry of activity six weeks into Fall Semester.

On Sept. 18, 18 area high school counselors were welcomed for an annual breakfast.

The fall College Fair on Sept. 24 saw a huge turnout. "We had over 500 high school students attend," Brewer said, "and 53 colleges and universities. This, by far, was the most well-attended in my 17 years with the college."

On Oct. 1, under the leadership of Career Development Manager Melinda Kedik-Stockwell, the college hosted its fourth annual Futures Fair with the theme "Superheroes." Futures Fair brings industry and business to campus to help students ponder their futures. More than 240 students connected with 13 employers to learn about SMC programs and career pathways.

On Oct. 3, Automotive Day for 225 students from seven high schools featured breakout sessions by Zolman Tire and Modern Muscle Car Factory.

This Friday and Saturday, Oct. 10 and 11, SMC hosts the Michigan Mathematics Association for Two-Year Colleges (MichMATYC) fall conference.

The fall choir concert, "Songs of the Soul," takes place Oct. 24 at 7 p.m. The band concert, "Bayou Breakdown," is scheduled for Nov. 7 at 7 p.m. The fall play, "Red Days," runs Nov. 20-22 at 7:30 p.m. and Nov. 23 at 2 p.m., all in the theatre of the Dale A. Lyons Building.

Photo provided
Trustee Becky Moore presented Math and Science Department Chair Robin Shipkosky of Coloma with her 15-year service pin.

On the athletics front, the 19-5 Roadrunners volleyball team continues to dominate, coming off a 3-1 weekend in Grand Rapids to face Marian Ancilla on Thursday at 6:30 p.m. in the 1st Source Bank Fieldhouse.

Sept. 26 the Roadrunners hosted the Michigan Community College Athletic Association (MCCAA) Western Conference Cross Country Championships at Spruce Ridge Golf Club. Freshman Owen Saylor won Runner of the Year, and the women's team captured the conference title. SMC women rank 13th nationally, the men, 14th.

Basketball season looms. The SMC women went 2-1 in their first scrimmages at Harper College over the weekend and the men travel to Rockford, Ill., this Saturday for three games at the Rock Valley College Jamboree. Regular season play kicks off Oct. 31 at home with the Roadrunner Classic.

Wrestling's intersquad dual meet unfolds at noon on Sunday in the Fieldhouse.

Trustee Becky Moore presented Math and Science Department Chair Robin Shipkosky of Coloma with her 15-year service pin.

Shipkosky, introduced by Dr. Melissa Kennedy, Academic Dean, School of Health, Natural and Social Sciences, has been an educator since 1981. Her first teaching position was sixth grade math in Bryan, Texas. For the next 15 years, she taught in the K-12 setting across Texas, Ohio and Indiana.

Shipkosky holds a bachelor's degree in curriculum and instruction from Texas A&M University. In 2009, Shipkosky added her master's degree in secondary education from Indiana University South Bend (IUSB). She started at SMC in 2010 as an instructor of developmental mathematics.

Shipkosky, whose husband, John, retired from Rieth-Riley Construction Co., has four grown daughters and nine grandchildren. Her oldest grandson recently graduated from Navy boot camp.

Trustees acknowledged eight donations totaling $4,267 to the SMC Foundation.

Nov. 12's regular meeting will take place at SMC's Niles campus.

Local students named to LMC dean's list

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

BENTON HARBOR — Lake Michigan College has announced the names of students recognized for academic achievement during the 2025 Summer semester.

The Dean's List includes 19 full-time students and 175 part-time students who achieved a 3.5 GPA or higher. Listed are area students who reached those achievements:

Dean's List

Buchanan: Aileen Gaytan
Dowagiac: Vicente Madison
Niles: Ericka Bergenham, Kaylee Forbes, Tiffany Varga, Jacob Weckler

Part-Time Dean's List

Buchanan: Isabella Benson, Hannah Bradbury, Peyton Flanagan, Caitlin Gearhart, Skyler Hampshire, Katelyn Leverton, Krystle Snow, Sydnee Sutherland
Cassopolis: Madeline Hooper
Dowagiac: William Leonard
Edwardsburg: Nicole Matthews, Ella O'Neill
Hartford: Zoey Howard
Jones: Destiney Burger
Marcellus: Allison Daugherty, Jessica Hand, Lindsey McClain
Mishawaka: Aiyana Burns, Brier Campos
Niles: Megan Anderson, Angela Ganus, Monica Greegor, Kahli Lorenz, Abigail Lusagala, Keegan May, Genesis Mendoza, Sydney Ponce, Sara Sly, Raissa Tchamba Epse Kenko
South Bend: Chloe Luneke

Quilt guild to host 'Pieces of Love' show

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — The Niles Piecemakers Quilt Guild will host its "Pieces of Love" Quilt Show from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, Oct. 24, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 25, at Hope Community Church, 2390 Lake St.

The show will feature more than 100 quilts on display and admission is $10.

The event will also include several attractions, including a raffle quilt, vendors, a silent auction, and a boutique featuring handmade items, Christmas gifts and decor. Refreshments will also be available.

For more information, visit the guild's website at nilespiecemakers.com.

Missing teenager found dead in Cass County lake

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

PORTER TOWNSHIP — A missing teen with autism was found dead in a Cass County lake Saturday, Oct. 4, according to the Cass County Sheriff's Office.

At approximately 9:04 a.m. Saturday, deputies responded to reports of a missing child who had walked away from his camper while at the Willow Shores Campground on US-12 in Porter Township. The family noticed their 16-year-old old son, Kyle, was missing from their trailer.

Deputies along with medical first responders from the Southeast Public Safety Authority, Cass County Sheriff Marine Division, the Porter Township Fire Dept. and Indian Lake Fire Department searched on land and in the water of Baldwin Lake. K-9 Britton, the Cass County Sheriff's Office Drone Team and MedFlight helicopter also assisted in the search. K-9 Britton indicated to her handler that Kyle had gone into Baldwin Lake.

A drone piloted by Sheriff's Office personnel located Kyle under the water at approximately 3:25 p.m. and the dive team recovered his body. He was deceased. This incident remains under investigation.

Body of Andrews student found in Lake Chapin

Micah Harris, 19, went under water while swimming toward bridge

By LEADER PUBLICATIONS

BERRIEN SPRINGS — The body of an Andrews University student was recovered by police in Lake Chapin over the weekend.

According to a news release from the Berrien Springs-Oronoko Township Police Department, emergency personnel were dispatched at about 4 p.m. Saturday to the area of South Main Street at Lake Chapin for a report of a missing person.

Police said several people had been swimming and were attempting to reach the bridge pylons in Lake Chapin.

Witnesses told police that one swimmer, identified as Micah Harris, 19, of Xenia, Ohio, experienced difficulty and went under the water.

Life-saving efforts by the other swimmers and people boating in the area were not successful, police said. A search conducted by the Berrien County Sheriff's Office Dive Team recovered Harris' body about four hours later.

The incident remains under investigation by police.

Assisting the Berrien Springs-Oronoko Township Police Department was the Berrien Springs-Oronoko Township Fire Department, Berrien County Sheriff's Office, the Berrien County Sheriff's Office Dive Team, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Medic 1 Ambulance.

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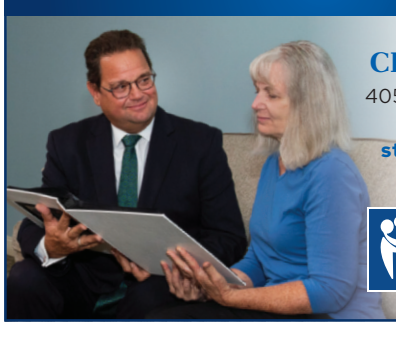
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ADMINISTRATIVE
Publisher
Rich Cains
219-455-2349
rich.cains@leaderpub.com

CUSTOMER SERVICE & DISTRIBUTION
Amy Glover
(269-687-7717
amy.glover@leaderpub.com

EDITORIAL MANAGING EDITOR
Maxwell Harden
231-750-5776
max.harden@leaderpub.com

ADVERTISING
Dennis Hinsey
269-362-1525
dennis.hinsey@leaderpub.com

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING
269-429-1396

Established in 1886
www.leaderpub.com

Published Saturday except holidays when the postal service does not deliver mail: New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day at 25 N. Second St., Niles, Michigan, by Leader Publications LLC. Periodicals paid at the Niles Post Office, 741 Broadway St. Postmaster: Send change of address to Circulation Manager, The Daily Star, 25 N. Second St., Niles, MI 49120.
Home Delivery by mail is local: $7.50/month, out of town: $10.50/month.
USPS 390-620

TEAM

From page A1

Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications

Lillian said. "It means a lot to see that the community sees everything that we're doing here and the work that it takes to get here."

The team is coached by mother-daughter duo Jenny Pegura and Zoe Scott, who have helmed the team for three years. Both Pegura and Scott showed on the Edwardsburg Equestrian team when they were in high school and enjoyed it so much that they decided to become coaches.

"Our family is full of Edwardsburg coaches," Pegura said. "Zoe and I coach the Equestrian team, my husband Zechariah coaches Middle School football and Rocket football and our son Jacob Pegura coaches Freshmen football. We are Eddies through and through."

The equestrian team begins with the junior team in the spring, which consists of students in 5th-8th grade, before the high school season begins in the fall. During the season, the team meets at Red Horse in Cassopolis on Tuesday evenings for practice. The high school team competed in three district meets before moving on to regionals, where they then qualified for State.

"This year we are taking 12 riders to state and are excited for a week of fun and adventure," Pegura said. "We are even letting the kids dress us up for the coaches costume class, where we are going to be The Lorax."

Working with horses has been a lifelong passion for Hailey, Lillian and their teammates.

"It's my favorite sport," Hailey said. "I quit volleyball for this, so I would say it's a big part of my life, considering we have them in our backyard."

"It's the people," Lillian said. "You just meet a lot of great people and it helps that I love horses."

According to Hailey and Lillian, there is more than meets the eye when it comes to equestrian.

"Competition days are all day," Hailey said. "You have a few events throughout the day but it's a lot of preparation and a lot of things that you've got to do to get ready."'"Competition days are all day," Hailey said. "You have a few events throughout the day but it's a lot of preparation and a lot of things that you've got to do to get ready."

"It's a lot of working with your horse every day because they have a mind of their own," Lillian said. "You have your own mind but it's hard to communicate with them. It's just a lot of hours every day to build that relationship with them so that way they can do stuff like this."

The Edwardsburg and surrounding community has stepped up and sponsored the team, according to coach Jenny Pegura. The team has received enough sponsorships to pay for nearly 100 percent of all costs for the team to go to state.

"We had a banner made with all of our sponsors on it so we can display it at State and all of our shows next year," she said. "We greatly appreciate the support and love of our community and school."

Naylee's father, Shane Shidler, said the team's success would not be possible without the support from coaches, families, trainers and the community.

"The support we've gotten has just been overwhelming," he said. "This is the second year we've been back to State finals; they hadn't done it in 16 years before last year. It's just really exciting because these kids, you know, they work hard, and they don't do it in the spotlight. They do it in the quiet, in the backyard of a barn. So it's pretty cool for them to get this publicity and the excitement built up around this."

After reaching the state championship last year for the first time in 16 years, the team would love nothing more than to bring a championship back to the community.

"Honestly, that would be amazing," said. "It's a dream of mine. It would be really cool if we accomplish that this time."

"It's just kind of reaffirming that we get to come back again this year because we got to go last year for the first time, and that was a lot of fun, but we get another chance to do better than last year." Lillian said. "It would mean so much. We hope to do it this year."

TOWNSHIP

From page A1

Board sets trick-or-treat time

The most contentious agenda item of the evening was the decision to have trick-or-treating within township limits during the hours of 6 and 7:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 31. The motion passed 4-3 as the township broke from tradition of having the same time and date as the City of Niles, which opted for Thursday, Oct. 30 due to the Niles football team hosting a playoff game on Friday night.

The discussion centered on whether the township should align with Niles for convenience or maintain the traditional Halloween night. Trustees noted that having separate nights would allow children to trick-or-treat twice. Treasurer Jim Ringler argued for consistency, stating that having different nights would be confusing.

One resident expressed concern that the separate dates might flippantly disregard residents who would like to attend a potential playoff game, which would be the same night as the township's proposed hours.

Durm-Hiatt favored Friday night because children would not have school the next day and noted that although a significant portion of Niles Township is in the Niles school system, the township is authorized to set its own hours.

In other business, the board:

■ Approved the purchase of a new copier at a cost of $9,005 dollars to replace its aging machine.

■ Approved a partial termination of the Farmland Development Rights Agreement for a township property owner seeking to remove their home and two acres from the FDRA. The remaining acreage/farmland will remain in the agreement.

■ Approved the resignation of Darlene Clevenger from Planning

■ Appointed Corey Buchar to the Planning Commission

■ Accepted a bid of $3,200 from Simmons Tree & Lawn for tree removal at the Beeson Street Mausoleum.

■ Re-appointed Don Padgett to Niles District Library

■ Passed a resolution 25-26 for Ontario Place Mobile Home Park. The resolution formally states to EGLE that the township does not provide water to Ontario Place as the park has its own water system.

CHARGED

From page A1

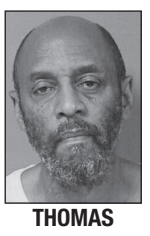
Upon arriving at work on Aug. 14, Eric Williams, owner of In The Cut Barbershop, 507 Sycamore St., found racist graffiti on the side wall of his shop.

The vandalism, which included a racial slur, was perpetrated by an individual using the tag "Ace." Vandalism with the same tag was recently found on a post in front of 7 Days Party Place, of which In The Cut shares a building with.

Leader Publications will be updated as more information becomes available.

COURT

From page A1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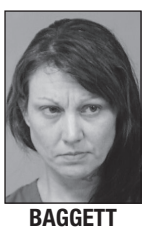
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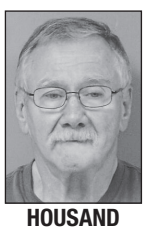
PENLEY

WHITMAN


HOUSAND

HORTON

Melvin Duane Thomas, 57, of South Bend, pleaded guilty to third-degree retail fraud and was sentenced to 300 days in jail with credit for 77 days served and $198 in fines and costs. He must pay $3,491.45 in restitution.

The incident occurred June 29 in Niles Township. Thomas maintains that two other people were also involved in the theft but they have not been arrested.

Defense attorney Daniel French said Thomas has been polite, respectful and forthcoming in his interactions with him. For his part, Thomas said he wanted to apologize for his actions. "I want to apologize for doing something stupid," he said. "I had no business taking stuff that didn't belong to me."

Berrien County Trial Court Judge Gordon Hosbein noted that Thomas will face harsher and harsher punishments in the future if he continues to commit crimes.

Joni Elaine Baggett, 41, of Niles, pleaded guilty to possession of methamphetamine and was sentenced to 120 days in jail with credit for 89 days served and $198 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred Sept. 5, 2023 in Niles Township.

Defense attorney Shayne Williams said that she felt a probation term would set Baggett up for failure, Baggett disagreed and said she had changed.

Judge Hosbein said that Baggett had been given the tools to change her life with past probation sentences. "Probation has given you all the tools you need but you have refused to use them, you know what you have to do," he said. "I hope you get help and get better. I'm not going to place you on probation, there is nothing left they can teach you."

Chelsy Lisa Penley, 32, of Niles, pleaded guilty to tampering with an electronic tether/monitor and was sentenced to 300 days in jail with credit for 106 days served and $198 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred Feb. 19, 2024 in Bertrand Township. She also faces charges in Indiana.

Penley acknowledged that she had cut off her ankle monitor because she was going places where her probation wouldn't allow her to go. "I'm hoping to get back on the right path," she said.

Cory Allan Whitman, 34, of South Bend, pleaded guilty to delivery of a controlled substance and was sentenced to 365 days in jail with credit for 73 days served. He must pay $348 in fines, costs and restitution.

The incident occurred June 17 in Oronoko Township.

"I made a stupid decision," he said. "I've spent 72 days in jail when I have a family to support. I understand that I made a bad decision."

William James Housand, 72, of Niles, pleaded guilty to third offense drunk driving and was sentenced to two years probation, 180 days in jail with credit for three days served, 480 hours of community service and $1,578 in fines and costs.. He can spend most of his jail term on tether after serving 30 days.

The incident occurred April 15 in Niles Township.

Defense attorney Alexandru Stancu said that Housand, a Vietnam veteran, has gotten inpatient services with the Veterans Administration and hopes to get more counseling with Riverwood. Stancu said there had been more than 10 years since Housand's last drunk driving conviction.

Housand apologized for his actions and said he had been sober for seven years before this incident.

Judge Hosbein noted that Housand would be going to prison on this charge except for the fact that there had been a 10 year gap between convictions which lowered the sentencing guidelines.

Kayli Dawn Horton, 31, of Niles, pleaded guilty to second offense possession of methamphetamine and was sentenced to two years probation in Drug Court, completion of the Tri-Cap program, 150 days in jail with credit for 84 days served and $658 in fines and costs. She can be released to Tri-Cap as soon as a bed becomes available.

The incident occurred May 19, 2023 in Niles.

"This is an opportunity for you to change your life," Judge Hosbein said. "This is the time and opportunity for you to do it. Choose yourself and this opportunity."

Death notices

Kathy Earlene Banaszak, 71, of Battle Creek, Michigan, passed away on Wednesday, October 1st, 2025. Arrangements have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Ruth Louise Aldridge, 74, of Niles, Michigan, passed away on Wednesday, October 1st, 2025. Arrangements have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Michael Lee Kohler, 62, passed away on Friday, September 26, 2025, in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

James Francis Dings, 83, passed away on Thursday, October 2, 2025, in Niles, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Yvonne Lea Griffin, 73, passed away on Saturday, October 4, 2025, in Niles, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Ashleigh Ann Fletcher, 29, of Niles, Michigan, passed away on Friday, October 03, 2025. Funeral services will be held at Brown Funeral Home at 1:00pm, on Saturday, October 11th.

Eleanor Dean Fisher, 93, of Niles, Michigan, passed away on Saturday, October 4, 2025. Arrangements have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Lawrence Lionel Howarth, 80, passed away on Saturday, October 4, 2025, in Benton Harbor, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Takura "Carlos" Rukuni, 42, of Berrien Springs, formerly Zimbabwe, passed away on Thursday, October 2, 2025. Arrangements are pending and have been entrusted to Allred Funeral Home, Berrien Springs. www.AllredFuneral.com.

Robert Allen Clark, 73, passed away on Sunday, September 28, 2025, in Jones, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

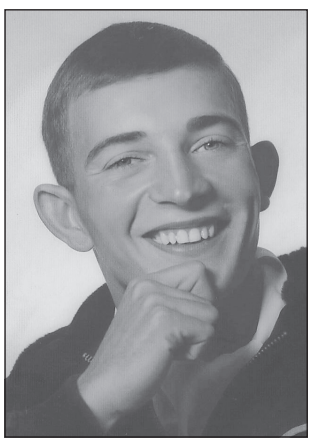
Anjali Gaikwad, 80, of St. Joseph, passed October 7, 2025. Funeral is October 19, 2025 at 10am at Village Church SDA in Berrien Springs. Arrangements by Allred Funeral Home. www.AllredFuneralHome.com

Mary Price, 88, formerly of Eau Claire, passed October 04, 2025. Funeral services were October 8, 2025 at Brightstar Tabernacle. Arrangements entrusted to Bowerman Funeral Home & Cremation Services. www.BowermanFuneral.com

OBITUARIES

Ronald Gunther

August 27, 1950 – September 28, 2025



Ronald Lee Gunther, 75, of Dowagiac, passed away peacefully at home on Tuesday, September 30, 2025, with his daughter by his side.

Born April 20, 1950, in Dowagiac, Michigan, Ron was the son of William and Gayla (Abrams) Gunther. From a young age, he embodied a strong sense of duty – a value that guided him throughout his life.

Ron proudly served in the United States Navy during the Vietnam Conflict, where his courage and sacrifice were recognized with the Purple Heart. Following his military service, Ron continued his commitment to others through a distinguished 25-year career with the Cass County Sheriff's Office, retiring as a respected Sergeant. His quiet strength and steady presence earned the trust and admiration of both colleagues and community members.

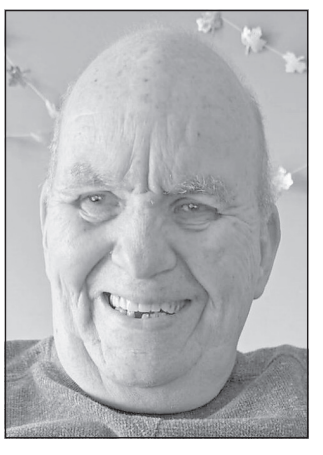
Family was at the heart of everything Ron did. He is survived by his devoted wife, Linda Gunther; his daughters, Jennifer McClenahan and Gayla Deering; and stepsons, Todd (Carmen) Clement, Richard (Heather) Wolf, and Adam (Debbie) Clement. He was a proud and loving grandfather to Dylan Wolf, Austin Wolf, Brooklyn O'Brien, Morgan Clement, Alyssa Wolf, Dane Clement, Cade Clement, Charlee Deering, and Kady Deering. He also leaves behind his sister, Karla Ostrem, and many extended family members and friends who will miss him deeply.

Preceding him in death were his parents and brother, Kenneth Gunther.

Ron will be remembered for his unwavering integrity, his service to country and community, and the deep love he had for his family. His legacy lives on in the lives he touched – quietly, generously, and without need for recognition.

Honoring Ron's wishes, cremation has taken place, and his family will be celebrating his life privately. Arrangements were entrusted to Clark Chapel – Starks Family Funeral Homes, Dowagiac. To share a memory or offer condolences, please visit Ron's personalized webpage at www.clarkch.com.

Randy McLeod



Randy C. McLeod, 75, passed away on Sunday, September 28, 2025, at St. Jude's Adult Foster Care in Escanaba, MI.

He was born on August 27, 1950, in Dowagiac, the son of Kermit and Isabella (Burrows) McLeod.

Randy Mcleod was raised with many challenges, but he never let them define him. He loved life deeply and cherished his family above all else. He was always ready for an outing, whether it was fishing, bowling, shooting billiards, or playing dice, Randy found joy in every moment and every gathering.

He was blessed with a caring family, devoted friends, and a supportive community and organizations that helped him thrive. Randy's kind and gentle soul, paired with his wonderful sense of humor, brightened the lives of all who knew him.

His family is proud to call him their brother and uncle. Though he will be deeply missed, his laughter, love and spirit will never be forgotten.

Surviving are his brother, James (Maryanne) McLeod of Gladstone, MI; sister, Sharon (Gary) McLeod VanSlooten of Holland, MI; nieces and nephews, Leeanne (Brent) Addis of Gowen, MI; Tracy VanSlooten of Seattle, WA, Evan VanSlooten of Holland, Megan (Mark Kinnunen) McLeod of Marquette, MI, and Amanda McLeod of Marquette, MI; and aunt, Bobbie (Dave) Best of Cassopolis.

Cremation has taken place, and his family will be celebrating his life privately. Inurnment will be in Riverside Cemetery, Dowagiac. Memorial contributions may be directed to St. Jude's AFC Home, 509 23rd St, Escanaba, MI 49829 or a local animal shelter in Randy's name. Arrangements were entrusted to Clark Chapel – Starks Family Funeral Homes, Dowagiac. To share a memory or offer condolences, please visit Randy's personalized webpage at www.clarkch.com.

OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Local sports teams are community lifelines

In these politically divided times, it's easy to feel weighed down by constant conflict. Yet here in Southwestern Michigan, sports continue to remind us that there are still places where unity wins out over division.

On Friday nights, high school football fields in Dowagiac, Niles, Edwardsburg and beyond bring neighbors together to cheer on our kids. Saturdays draw fans across the region to watch the University of Michigan, Notre Dame, or Michigan State, where rivalries are fierce, but friendships still thrive. Sundays often split households between the Chicago Bears and Detroit Lions, yet even those good-natured rivalries are a reminder that we can disagree without bitterness.

Even within the Pokagon Band, our own sports and recreation programs do more than encourage fitness – they build connection, joy, and resilience.

These moments matter. They give us space to set aside political tension, to celebrate something bigger than ourselves, and to find strength in community. Sports may not solve our political problems, but they provide the hope and unity we need to face them.

In times like these, supporting our teams isn't just entertainment, it's a lifeline.

Jason Gatties
Dowagiac

Write us

Here's how to submit a letter to the editor:

Online: leaderpub.com/services/letters-to-the-editor-submission/

Email: news@leaderpub.com

Regular mail: Editorial Page, Leader Publications, 25 N. 2nd St., Niles MI 49120

All letters should include a daytime telephone number and street address for verification.

Letters must be 500 words or fewer. Letters relating to candidates and ballot issues in upcoming elections will be limited to 300 words.

Letters must be of general public interest. All letters must be the original work of the authors. Form letters will not be accepted. In most cases, a writer whose letter is published must wait one month before having another letter published.

Leader Publications reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, grammar, inappropriate content and libel.

All letters must be signed by individuals, not groups. Anonymous letters will not be published.

Vote 'yes' on LMC millage renewal

Dear Editor:

I encourage everyone in our community to vote yes on the Lake Michigan College millage renewal and the proposed millage reduction. This is a responsible plan that keeps college affordable and strong while also lowering the tax burden for local residents.

The first millage renewal is not a new tax. It simply continues the support that allows LMC to provide quality education, job training, and partnerships with local businesses. Thousands of students rely on these programs each year to gain skills that keep our workforce competitive.

At the same time, the college is proposing to reduce the second millage by 50 percent. This means taxpayers get real relief without sacrificing the services and opportunities LMC provides. It's a win-win: students still get the education and training they need, and the community saves money.

This balanced approach shows fiscal responsibility and a commitment to both education and taxpayers. On Election Day, please join me in voting yes for the Lake Michigan College millage renewal and millage reduction.

Sincerely,

Mary Jo Tomasini
CEO, Competitive Edge
Trustee,
LMC Board of Trustees

Vote 'yes' to banning marijuana in Niles Township

I don't know the people behind the "Vote No on question 2 committee" but this advertisement is no less than a form of intimidation on the citizens of Niles Township. Using this scare tactic that if it does not pass, a special assessment will be applied. Wow, the elected leaders make poor business decisions and obviously did not do their homework. Typical money hungry establishments. The township board, the businesses that sold out for a quick buck and the marijuana businesses that seized on a weak local government before they could realize what they will turn our community into.

I for one will get out and push the narrative to ban the sellout of our township to these marijuana businesses ... I don't know the exact number of places in the area, but I have seen a minimum of seven just driving in our community in Niles, Buchanan and Edwardsburg. What a confusing lesson to be teaching our kids. Say no to drugs but if you say yes, go across the street and buy all you want.

Tom Spain
Niles

THE CONVERSATION

Tribal colleges and universities aren't well known, but are a crucial steppingstone for Native students

By CYNTHIA LINDQUIST
University of North Dakota
(The Conversation)

Most Native American high school students do not attend or graduate from college.

As a tribal member of Spirit Lake Nation in North Dakota and the former president of Cankdeska Cikana Community College in Fort Totten, North Dakota, I recognize the difference that tribal colleges and universities, like the one I used to work at, can have in rerouting Native students' education journeys.

Tribal colleges and universities, or TCUs, are public institutions that are founded and run by a Native American tribe and focus on serving Native American students and communities.

The approximately 3.9 million Native Americans living in the U.S. have long recognized that TCUs are unique institutions that help Native students succeed in school and earn higher education degrees.

Most Americans, though, have no idea that tribal colleges and universities even exist, let alone know how they work.

Understanding tribal colleges

TCUs enroll approximately 30,000 students each year, including some non-Native students. The median annual tuition at TCUs is US$3,572, making them more affordable than most other public universities.

There are 35 accredited TCUs across 13 states, including Montana, Arizona, Oklahoma, North Dakota and South Dakota. All of these schools are nonprofits.

While a single Native tribe sometimes sets up a tribal college, in other cases a consortium of tribes or the federal government helps establish a school.

Despite their differences, tribal colleges and universities all have the same mission of teaching Indigenous history, culture and languages.

All the tribal colleges also offer associate degrees and certifications. Twenty-two of them have only baccalaureate programs, and nine have master's programs. Navajo Technical University, a tribal college in Crownpoint, New Mexico, which has the largest enrollment size of all the TCUs, began offering a first of its kind doctorate program in Diné Studies in 2024. This program focuses on the language, culture and history of the Diné people, also known as Navajo people.

Affordability has always been a consideration when TCUs set tuition and fees, since most are located on rural American Indian reservations with high unemployment and poverty rates, as well as few available jobs.

TCUs keep their tuition relatively low in part because a majority of their funding comes from the federal government. They also receive funding from philanthropic organizations.

TCUs also generally have minimal overhead costs, since most students live off-campus and only a handful of these colleges and universities offer on-campus housing. Most TCUs have both in-person and online courses.

While there is no single profile of a TCU student, I found that it is common to encounter a 30-year-old, single mother who works full time while trying to earn a college degree.

A growth in college enrollment

In 1968, just 181 Native Americans graduated from a four-year college.

That same year, the Navajo Nation established the first tribal college, then called the Navajo Community College, in Tsaile, Arizona. This school is now called Diné College.

Several factors prevented most Native American students from attending a college or university.

The cost of college was prohibitive, and many Native American students were also not adequately prepared for college in high school. These students and their families also feared that higher education could force them to assimilate into Western and white culture, and erase their own Native traditions and languages.

A long political relationship

When considering this historical context, it is important to understand that Native Americans have a unique relationship with the federal government.

Native Americans largely consider this relationship a political one, bound by the various legal precedents, federal policies and executive orders from the 1800s and onward. These orders and policies from the past several hundred years vary, but they often focus on questions of land, assimilation and the political independence of Native tribes.

There are also treaties and orders that focus on education and spell out the federal government's responsibility to help coordinate and give money to support tribal education.

In 1978, Congress approved the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act, which recognized tribal colleges as higher education institutions and established that the federal government would regularly help fund these schools.

Alongside the creation of new tribal colleges and universities over the past several decades, more and more Native people living on reservations have graduated from high school and received higher education degrees.

The percentage of Native college graduates rose 125 percent from 1990 to 2020. While 4.5 percent of Native students living on reservations received a college degree in 1990, that percentage rose to 10.3 percent with at least a college degree in 2020, according to findings by Harvard Kennedy School in September.

Yet, unlike the high school trends, Native people still graduate college at a much lower rate than the general American population.

In 1990, 20.3 percent of all Americans had at least a college degree. In 2020, 34.3 percent of Americans had a college degree at a minimum, according to the Harvard Kennedy School findings.

A lasting impact

While tribal colleges and universities receive state and federal funding, they are chronically underfunded and often operate in survival mode. In some cases, they lack money to make needed repairs on campus buildings.

One major reason for this shortfall: While Congress agreed in the late 1970s to annually give tribal colleges $8,000 for each Native student they enroll, it has not met this financial and political commitment.

Tribal colleges annually receive $250 million less than what the federal government promised them, a 2024 ProPublica investigation found.

Tribal college and universities' futures were cast in doubt in the spring of 2025, when the Trump administration announced a proposal to cut the Bureau of Indian Education's annual budget from $183 million to $22 million. The Bureau of Indian Education is part of the Department of the Interior and oversees education for Native students.

But the Department of Education went on to announce in September that it would make a one-time, $495 million investment in historically Black colleges and universities and TCUs.

TCU leaders say they are still trying to understand the significance of this funding announcement and what it will result in.

I think it is important to recognize that TCUs make broad contributions to society, well beyond the impact they have on individual students.

TCUs teach entrepreneurship and business development and serve as pilot sites in launching businesses, for example.

For every federal dollar invested in tribal colleges, the schools return $1.60 in tax revenue through the increased tax payments of their alumni and their alumni's employers, according to a September 2025 report by the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, a national organization that represents TCUs.

TCU alumni also generated $3.8 billion in added income, or gross domestic product, to the national economy from October 2022 through September 2023.

These schools offer a unique pathway for Native students to attend a higher education institution, while teaching them the skills they need to build a stable career.

Cynthia Lindquist is director of Tribal Initiatives and Collaborations at the University of North Dakota. The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts. This article is republished under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article at https://theconversation.com.

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‘Horrific and disturbing’: Cassopolis man gets prison time in sex trafficking case

By DEBRA HAIGHT
For Leader Publications

CASSOPOLIS — A Cassopolis man involved in what Prosecutor Victor Fitz described as a sex trafficking case was sentenced to prison Friday in Cass County Circuit Court.

Johnathon Abram-Barrett, 25, of Cassopolis, pleaded guilty to third-degree criminal sexual conduct involving a victim age 13 to 15 and was sentenced to 10 years to 15 years in prison and $1,048 in fines and costs. He must register as a sex offender and have no contact with anyone under age 18.

BARRETT

Three charges were dismissed in the case: first-degree criminal sexual conduct, delivery of methamphetamine and accosting children for immoral purposes. He was accused of providing the girl with meth. He could have faced a mandatory 25-year prison term if convicted of first-degree criminal sexual conduct.

He has credit for no time served as he is currently in prison on other charges. He was sentenced to prison in May on carrying a weapon with unlawful intent, assault with a dangerous weapon and use of a weapon in the commission of a felony. He also has past convictions for accosting children for immoral purposes and failing to register as a sex offender.

The incidents occurred in 2023 and 2024 at locations in Berrien and Cass counties. The 13-year-old girl who was the victim in this case was rescued in August, 2024 by the Southwest Michigan Drug Enforcement Team at a Benton Harbor area hotel. Two other men have also been sentenced in connection with the incidents.

“It’s been quite a while since I’ve seen this case this horrific and disturbing,” Fitz said. “This is textbook sex trafficking. What he did to this girl was an abomination. She was treated as an object, not a human being. There was no way she should have been subjected to this. This was a nightmare for her and will be for the rest of her life. It’s simply awful.”

Defense attorney Zachary Smith acknowledged that “the circumstances were bad here” but called it a matter of statutory rape and not sex trafficking. He noted that Abram-Barrett had been abused himself as a child. For his part, Abram-Barrett said he planned to appeal his sentence.

Cass County Circuit Court Judge Mark Herman said he found it hard to believe Abram-Barrett’s assertion that he thought the victim was 18. He noted that the girl said her mother had told Abram-Barrett that her daughter was 13 when he had met them at a Dowagiac gas station.

Judge Herman questioned how Abram-Barrett and others who claim they have been abused as children then turn around and abuse children themselves. “People will say they were abused and how horrible it was,” he said. “If it was horrible for you and then you do it to others. It is not an excuse even if it may be a reason it’s happening.”

“What you did to this young lady was unconscionable,” he said. “She will (struggle) emotionally for years. You knew her mother was in jail and you took advantage of her, it shocks my conscience.”

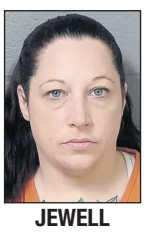
In other sentencings, area residents were given probation and in one instance credit for time served.

Nicholas Kyle Baker, 27, of Dowagiac, pleaded guilty to third offense drunk driving and domestic violence and was sentenced to 11 months probation 30 days in jail with credit for six days served and 480 hours of community service on the drunk driving charge and nine months probation, credit for six days served on the domestic violence charge. He must pay a total of $2,428 in fines, costs and restitution.

If Baker is successful on probation, the drunk driving charge will be reduced to a second offense misdemeanor and the domestic violence charge will be dismissed. The 30 day jail term was suspended to the end of the probation and may not have to be served.

BAKER

BOHT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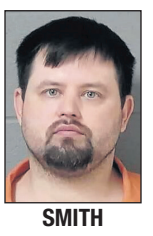
SMITH

The incident occurred March 7 in Pokagon Township. Police were called to his parents’ home where Baker had wrestled his father to the ground and tried to strangle him when the older Baker tried to stop him from driving away with his young daughter while he was drunk. His blood alcohol level was .17, more than twice the legal limit.

Baker apologized and said he has been sober since that incident and wants to move forward with his life.

James Boht, Jr., 44, of Dowagiac, had his delayed sentence continued from a 2024 domestic violence incident. His probation was extended for one year.

Samantha Jewell, 41, of Sturgis, pleaded guilty to use of methamphetamine and was sentenced to two years probation, credit for 89 days served and $2,268 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred May 29 in Dowagiac when her boyfriend’s parole agents made a home visit and found meth pipes and meth.

Dennis Smith II, 33, of Edwardsburg, pleaded guilty to possession of methamphetamine as a habitual offender and was sentenced to credit for 142 days served and $1,548 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred April 13, 2023 in Edwardsburg at a traffic stop. Smith since then has been charged and convicted of similar crimes in Elkhart County and is on probation there.

Photo provided
Cass County judges Stacey Rentfrow, Judge Carol Bealor, and Mark Herman pose for a photo during Reunification Day festivities.

Cass County Courts celebrate Reunification Day

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

CASSOPOLIS — The Cass County Courts celebrated its annual Reunification Day on Friday, Oct. 3, at Dodd Park, expanding the event to honor individuals achieving long-term recovery through the county’s problem-solving courts.

While many Michigan courts observe Reunification Day in June, the Cass County Courts chose the October date for their 2025 celebration. The event traditionally highlights the importance of family reunification and recognizes the perseverance of parents and the work of community professionals.

The celebration was expanded this year to include individuals who have achieved long-term recovery from substance abuse through support from the problem-solving courts.

Attendees at Dodd Park enjoyed a variety of activities, including iced apple cider provided by the Coffee Pot, family photos, tractor rides, pumpkin decorating and food from court staff.

Chief Judge Carol Bealor addressed the crowd, emphasizing the collective benefit of the courts’ work.

“We are so thankful for the support of our community and the hard work of our team members who facilitate positive outcomes for individuals and families working towards long term recovery from substance abuse which builds better childhoods for our children, healthier and more resilient individuals, and safer and stronger communities.”

Michigan’s problem-solving courts are designed to be innovative, reaching 97 percent of the state’s population. Unlike traditional courts, treatment courts are not adversarial and use a team approach to prevent further offenses and save local governments the cost of incarceration. Participants in these programs access treatment and support to address underlying issues like alcohol or drug abuse, mental illness and untreated trauma.

Cass County offers a full continuum of these courts focused on evidence-based responses to restore families and improve outcomes. These programs include:

- Family Treatment Court: Started by retired Judge Susan L. Dobrich, now presided over by Chief Judge Carol Montavon Bealor.
- Adult Treatment Court/Sobriety Court: Presided over by Judge Rentfrow.
- Mental Health Court: Presided over by Judge Herman.
- Swift and Sure Sanctions Probation Program: Presided over by Judge Herman.

Participants in these programs receive intensive case management and supportive services from a multi-disciplinary team, which often includes peer support from individuals with lived recovery experiences.

Man stabbed, truck stolen in Newberg Township

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

CASSOPOLIS — A Newberg Township man was stabbed and had his truck stolen early Wednesday morning, according to the Cass County Sheriff’s Office.

Deputies from the Cass County Sheriff’s Office responded to a 911 call at 5:40 a.m. on Oct. 8, reporting a stabbing and vehicle theft near the intersection of Patterson Hill Road and Mann Street.

On the scene, deputies found a male victim who reported that he had been riding with two other male subjects when one of them stabbed him and both proceeded to steal his truck.

Law enforcement officers from the Cass County Sheriff’s Office, Pokagon Tribal Police, and the Village of Cassopolis located the stolen truck and arrested the two suspects.

The stabbing victim was transported by ambulance to Elkhart General Hospital, where he is reported to be in stable condition. The names of all persons involved are being withheld pending the suspects’ arraignment. The incident remains under investigation.

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Colorful floats rolled through town Friday, Oct. 3 as Niles High School hosted its annual homecoming parade. During the parade, classes competed against each other for the bragging rights of having the best float. The Vikings took on Three Rivers and defeated the Wildcats 49-0.

– Maxwell Harden

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Sports

Got results?
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Rangers receive forfeit win over Sand Creek

By SCOTT HASSINGER
Leader Publications Contributor

CASSOPOLIS — The plans for the Cassopolis football team for Friday night have changed a bit.

Jeremiah Lee and his coaching staff were in the thick of preparing the Rangers for their fourth home game this season when the school received a call Wednesday morning from Sand Creek.

The Aggies, a member of the Big 8 Conference and winless in six games, were scheduled to make the 110-mile trip to Cassopolis for a 7 p.m. kickoff. However, Sand Creek did not have enough healthy players to safely compete this week. The Aggies, who lost 42-12 a week ago to Vermontville-Maple Valley, were also forced to forfeit its game a couple weeks ago to Springport as well.

Sand Creek, which has been outscored this season by a combined 183-78, is coached by Derek Hewitt. The Aggies qualified for the state playoffs the last two seasons losing both times in the Division 7 district semifinals.

Cassopolis' head coach knows far too well about the devastating effects a rash of injuries can have, especially on a football team whose roster is dominated by youth.

Just one year ago, Lee had to make a difficult decision to suspend Cassopolis' varsity season due to a player shortage brought on by multiple injuries to a young team. The Rangers' freshmen and sophomore team members played two games at the junior varsity level and won both of those against Decatur and Dowagiac.

See **RANGERS**, page B2

Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications

The Cassopolis football team improves to 2-5 on the season following Sand Lake's forfeit.

Tanya Hagen / For Leader Publications

The Dowagiac Chieftains fell to Berrien Springs 21-0 Oct. 3.

Shamrocks return to winning ways

Berrien Springs bounces back from first loss with shutout of Dowagiac

By BEN SANDERS
For Leader Publications

DOWAGIAC — Berrien Springs got back on track with a convincing 21-0 victory over Dowagiac in a Lakeland Conference football game last Friday.

The Shamrocks rebounded from their first loss of the season, a mistake-filled 16-13 defeat against Buchanan the previous week.

"We talked all week about staying focused and not making mental mistakes," Berrien Springs coach Ben Iliff said. "We're not going to be perfect, but we limit them and we play to our level, we're going to be tough to beat. That's exactly what we showed tonight."

Dowagiac (1-1 Lakeland, 4-2) got off to a bad start Friday, fumbling the ball on its third play from scrimmage. Carson Tripp recovered for Berrien Springs (1-1, 4-1), the first of three Shamrock fumble recoveries.

"When you dig yourself a hole, that's what happens," Dowagiac coach Duane Davis said. "It's hard to get out of it."

Berrien Springs turned that first fumble into an early 6-0 lead on a 12-yard touchdown run by Travonn Williams. The rest of the first half was relatively uneventful, with the teams trading punts until the Shamrocks finished it with an impressive drive.

Berrien Springs started at its own 14-yard line, and quickly went backwards seven yards on a penalty. Quarterback Braelin Hurst then got the Shamrocks moving in the right direction with a 29-yard run, and continued to make plays to lead his team down the field.

See **SHAMROCKS**, page B2

Buchanan falls to defending D7 champ Millington 35-8

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

BUCHANAN — The Millington football team made the most of its six-hour round trip Friday, Oct. 3.

The defending Division 7 state champions scored 28 unanswered points and went on to spoil Buchanan's Homecoming with a 35-8 win.

Lucas Zeiger completed 5 of 20 passes for 107 yards and one touchdown and had 15 carries for 21 yards including a pair of fourth down conversions to keep Buchanan's scoring drives alive. Max Cornelius, the team's leading rusher, finished with 10 carries for 15 yards and one catch for 33 yards while Carson Deming had four carries for 13 yards. Thompson had one catch for 71 yards and Isaiah Nelson had one catch for 21 yards.

On defense, Jameson Pleasant had nine total tackles and Nelson had eight while Thompson had four and one sack.

The Cardinals outgained the Bucks 413-178 in total yards, including a 305-34 edge in rushing yards. Millington also had four turnovers compared to Buchanan's two. While the Bucks struggled against a physical Cardinals team, they had two drives into the Millington red zone that ended with turnovers on downs as well as a fumble into the Millington red zone that was recovered by the Cardinals.

According to head coach Mark Frey, what unfolded on the field Friday night was not Buchanan football.

"We made a lot of mistakes," Frey said. "You can't leave three touchdowns on the field in the red zone, so we gotta clean that up. We knew it was gonna be a battle. You can see it on film. They're gonna be a tough team. They won state last year, so most people are afraid of scheduling them. So we tried to take that next step and as a program and we've got a little bit of work to do."

Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications

The Buchanan football team fell to Millington 35-8 last week.

Millington got on the board with a one-yard run by Drake Terwilliger to take a 7-0 lead on their opening drive. The Cardinals scored three more touchdowns in the first half on explosive plays: a 40-yard pass from Garret Woodward to Layden Delong, a 34-yard run from Logan Myers and a 24-yard pass from Woodward to Delong on 4th and 12 to make it 28-0 with 1:18 left in the half.

The Bucks' lone touchdown of the game came in the closing minutes of the first half as quarterback Lucas Zeiger connected with Owen Thompson on a 71-yard touchdown pass. The Bucks converted the two-point conversion to make it a 28-8 game at halftime.

After a scoreless third quarter, the Cardinals found the end zone one more time via a 60-yard run by Hudson Myers to go up 35-8 with 5:21 left in the game.

"They're just a physical team and if we don't stay gap-sound, which is what occurred on three of the touchdowns, that's gonna happen," Frey said. "You stay gap-sound and you don't give up big plays on 3rd and 16 and 4th and 12, you know, then you come out the winner."

While the loss hurts, Frey believes playing against state championship pedigree will pay dividends through the regular season and beyond.

"When you walk past [the Millington kids] in the handshake line, you can see they have the size and the speed that we haven't seen all season," Frey said. "So getting it under our belt and knowing that this is the best team we'll probably have faced and maybe face until the playoffs is a good place to be. So next week, we can come out a little more confident against a more equal opponent."

The Bucks hosted Dowagiac Friday in a key Lakeland Conference matchup. Visit heraldpalladium.com/leaderpub for a recap of the game.

Edwardsburg, Buchanan runners medal at the Portage Invite

By SCOTT HASSINGER
For Leader Publications

PORTAGE — Area runners braved warm temperatures and high humidity to compete in Saturday's prestigious Portage Cross Country Invitational at Portage West Middle School.

Several participating schools will return in a few weeks for regional competition on the same 5,000-meter (3.1 mile) course.

Edwardsburg turned in the best finish among area boys' teams in the Division 2 race. The Eddies finished in 15th place with a score of 531 followed by Niles in 44th with 1131 and Dowagiac finished in the 50th place spot with 1580.

Senior George Scupham placed 37th to lead Edwardsburg with a time of 16:54. Sophomore Ethan Ferguson was the next Eddie to cross the line in 49th place with a time of 17:02.7 followed by Gavin Ayers (135th, 18:07.5), Jaden Gregory (148th, 18:24.2) and Riley Szala (179th, 18:45.4) to round out the scoring.

Concluding the Eddies' top seven were Braiden Schub (212th, 19:04.5) and Lucas Frentz (217th, 19:10).

Scott Hassinger / For Leader Publications

Area teams competed in the Portage Cross Country Invitational Saturday at Portage West Middle School. (Scott Hassinger/Leader Publications)

Niles freshman John Brickley led the Vikings with his 76th place time of 17:30.8. Beau Kirtdoll was the next Viking to finish in 241st at 19:20.3. Also figuring in the scoring for Niles were Liam Pesce (263rd, 19:40.4), Theodore Arseneau (310th, 20:15.9) and Oliver Trout (346th, 20:51).

Other Vikings that competed were Miguel Rodriguez (360th, 21:14.5) and Adolfo Sanchez-Perez (431st, 25:44.4).

Dowagiac has just enough runners to post a boys' team score. Leading Ryan Maggert's Chieftains was Josue Morales-Perez in 333rd with a time of 20:39.1. Also competing for Dowagiac were Angel Brito (347th, 20:51.1), Balois Franco (357th, 21:07.3), Jeremiah Hargreaves (415th, 23:38.4) and Mayson Preston (435th, 28:34.7).

"Its a fast course with a few hills, but this is the course where a lot of our kids set their personal bests last year. There is alot of talent here that pulls our runners along and helps us out. We didn't have our best showing today, but it was very hot out. Our goals for the remainder of the season are to set as many personal bests and do well at regionals," Maggert said.

Buchanan earned ninth in the Division 3 boys' race with a score of 285.

Junior John Keser paced the Bucks with a fourth-place time of 16:20.3 followed by senior Liam McBeth (27th, 17:10.5), Jack Sherwood (31st, 17:17.8), Jacob Kuntz (112th, 18:46.1) and Bentley Molitor (133rd, 19:10.6).

Completing the Bucks' top seven were Charles Spencer (138th, 19:17.7) and Marley Hinds (208th, 20:11.1).

In the girls' meet, Niles was the lone team to qualify for a score in Division 2 where the Lady Vikings scored 620 points to finish in 23rd place.

Lena Coulson, a freshman, turned in the top place for Niles with time of 21:19.4 good for 88th place. Other scorers for the Lady Vikings were Claire Devleschoward (129th, 22:14.7), Katie Walsh (207th, 23:45.3), Amari Aldridge (210th, 23:46.5) and Haili Martz (218th, 23:58.9).

Edwardsburg's top finishers were sophomore Grace Leman (52nd, 20:23.4) and Giselle Babcock (203rd, 23:36.9).

Edwardsburg head coach Lito Ramirez was pleased with his runners' efforts in both the boys' and girls' races.

"It was a very difficult day today with the heat. But we had George and Ethan medal for us in the boys' race. Grace also ran well. Our top runner Georgia Babcock was unable to finish the race due to some breathing issues, but she will bounce back and got a clean bill of health from the great medical staff who attended to her," Ramirez said.

Sophomore Sadie Bonczynski (147th, 22:40.8) was Dowagiac's top finisher on the day.

Buchanan freshman Tala Carlin finished 13th in the Division 3 girls' race with a time of 19:59.8.

Alison Murray of Niles Brandywine finished in 51st with a time of 21:21.7.

Early momentum lifts Niles to 49-0 win over Three Rivers

By SCOTT HASSINGER
For Leader Publications

NILES — It was a Happy Homecoming Night for the Niles football team Friday, which used its big and powerful offensive line and stingy defense to dismantle Wolverine Conference foe Three Rivers 49-0.

The win keeps Niles, ranked No. 4 in the latest Michigan Sports Writers football rankings, unbeaten at 6-0, including a 4-0 mark in the Wolverine. Three Rivers, meanwhile, suffered its second straight loss and fell to 4-2 overall and 2-2 in the league.

Niles received the ball to open the contest and scored in six plays on a 33-yard TD scamper by senior tailback Alex Anderson. Vikings' place kicker Michael Matlock then booted the first of his three PATs in the game for a 7-0 lead.

Vikings' senior cornerback Brenden Olsen recovered a Three Rivers fumble two plays into the Wildcats' first series that set up a seven-yard TD dash by senior fullback Elijah Norris. A two-point conversion pass failed, but the Vikings' had increased their lead to 13-0 with 7:29 left in the period.

Olsen's recovery was another example of Niles being able to dominate opponents by creating turnovers and capitalizing on its opponents' mistakes with points on the board.

"Our emphasis was to set the tone and come out and put it to them. In the past few games we've come out slow. The whole idea tonight was to start strong. I got that early fumble recovery and from there our offense just exploded. If we continue to make the adjustments we need to then we got this," Olsen said.

The Vikings' defense then forced the Wildcats into a punting situation on the ensuring series. But a fumbled snap by the visitors forced Three Rivers' Brayden Carpenter to pick up the pigskin and try to run for a first down. Carpenter was swarmed moments later and tackled on his own 28.

Niles scored quickly in five plays with freshman quarterback William Turnbull sneaking in Three Rivers' endzone from one yard out. Anderson added a conversion run to boost the Vikings' advantage to 21-0 entering the second quarter.

The next Vikings' scoring drive covered 70-yards with Anderson getting loose on a 15-yard TD dash. Matlock's PAT put Niles in front 28-0 with 11:33 left before halftime.

Niles had two other chances to put additional points on the board in the first half. The Vikings' drove down to the Wildcat 25-yard line before turning the ball over on a fumble. Matlock also was wide left on a 30-yard field-goal attempt as time expired in the first half.

Scott Hassinger / For Leader Publications

Senior halfback Alex Anderson rips off a big chunk of yardage as he is pursued by Three Rivers' defenders Ethan Moreland (21).

"We had real good field position the first couple of quarters. I was kind've disappointed we didn't have those two other scores. Up front it was a different story because we were able to do anything we wanted. I'm not saying this to brag, but it's difficult for other teams to simulate how well we're going to come off the ball in practice," said Niles head coach Scot Shaw, who notched his 250th win of his career.

Niles had three ballcarriers top the 100-yard mark in the first half alone: Sophomore Brandon Walsh carried nine times for 138 first-half yards. Anderson added six touches for 102 yards and one touchdown. Norris lugged the pigskin 17 times for 101 yards and two TDs. Turnbull had one carry for a score as well.

It was the third consecutive game that Anderson rushed for big yardage in a Niles' victory.

"Mainly we had been a second-half team, but lately we've been jumping on our opponent early and aren't that kind of team that starts slow any longer. We're finally going to put it on teams in the first half and continue that on during the second half," Anderson said.

While pleased with being a big contributor in the Vikings' ground assault, Anderson said its all due to a huge offensive line. That group includes guards Chase Brawley and Brandon Hamilton; center Shane Barber, along with tackles Trenton Scott and Evan Williams.

"I can make a couple people miss on tackles when I'm running the ball, but I can't really do anything without those guys that are blocking in front of me. I'm just happy to say my linemen do most of my work for me and I just move my feet. I'm really proud of our freshman quarterback who continues to push us and improve himself to get us to more wins," Anderson added.

Senior inside linebacker Ward Cheney blocked a Three Rivers' punt that he also ended up recovering at the Wildcats one-yard line at the 9:31 mark of the third quarter. Sophomore Brandon Walsh scored on the next play to put the Wildcats in front 34-0. Matlock's PAT failed.

The Vikings' defense forced the Wildcats into another three and out. Niles took possession and drove 58 yards to paydirt with Norris rambling nine yards for the TD and Matlock added the PAT for a 41-0 advantage entering the fourth quarter.

The Vikings would cross the Wildcat goal line one more time with 11:12 left in the game on a 23-yard ground strike by sophomore running back Brogan Lake. Olsen's conversion run capped off the scoring.

Junior Braeden Turay added a fumble recovery for the Vikings on a Three Rivers' punt with 4:02 left in the game.

Cheney had seven tackles in the first half and Bradley Woolverton added a quarterback sack. Olsen and Jayelin Vawter both had three tackles.

"I was really pleased with how our defense played tonight. Brenden got that early fumble recovery. He's a good player, but I was especially pleased with how well our defensive backs performed. For us to shutout a team like Three Rivers, who I think is a pretty good offensive team, is a testament to how we played defensively," Shaw said.

"This was probably our best overall game that we've played so far this year. We did a lot of things right, but we still have a few things to work on and get ready for Vicksburg next week," Shaw said.

Second-year Three Rivers head coach Jeff Awe, who played for Shaw during his coaching tenure at Three Rivers, said the game boiled down to critical mistakes made by his squad.

"We made some terrible mistakes and when you do that against a good football team like Niles its magnified. Niles is a physical and well-coached football team. Our hats go off to them," Awe said.

Niles will visit Vicksburg next week for a key conference game at 7 p.m.

Buchanan edges Brandywine 1-0 in D3 district opener

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

BUCHANAN — The Buchanan boys soccer team defeated rival Brandywine 1-0 in the Division 3 district opener on Wednesday, advancing to the semifinal round.

Preston Payne scored the match's only goal in the 21st minute, assisted by Easton May. The goal marked Payne's 12th goal and May's 12th assist of the season. Goalkeeper Charley Cowart earned the shutout for the Bucks.

Buchanan improved its record to 12-6-2, while Brandywine finished its season with a 6-10-1 record.

"First off, I commend Brandywine on a well-fought game," said Buchanan coach Ryan Haines. "They have greatly improved this season behind first-year head coach Alex Ulrickson and did an excellent job keeping the game close."

The team's focus this year is on its "One Goal" motto: winning a district championship, which the program has not done since 2003.

Photo provided

The Buchanan boys soccer team defeated rival Brandywine 1-0 in the Division 3 district opener on Wednesday, advancing to the semifinal round.

"It's what I talk about at every game and practice," he said. "That One Goal is a district championship. Every win, loss, tie, and practice during the regular season has helped build this program during this season in search of something we haven't won since 2003."

The Bucks now look ahead to the district semifinal next Tuesday at 7 p.m. They will face the Lakeland Conference champion Berrien Springs, an opponent the Bucks lost to 5-0 earlier this month.

Brandywine boys tennis beats Edwardsburg 6-2

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

EDWARDSBURG — The Brandywine boys tennis team defeated Edwardsburg 6-2 on Monday.

The Bobcats took three of the four flights. Ryder Richard won a tough three-set match at No. 1 singles against Adam Redden (6-4, 2-6, 10-4). Kyler Marshall defeated Ethan Layman at No. 3 singles (6-4, 7-6 (8)), and Malachi Gamble won against Bryce Linton at No. 4 singles (6-4, 7-5). Edwardsburg's lone singles victory came at No. 2, where Logan Summy defeated Blake Magyar (6-1, 6-0).

In doubles play, Brandywine took three flights. The No. 2 team of Bryce Hood and Hudson Aalfs won 6-0, 6-0 against Kade Hoven and Xander Souchick. Jordan Bryant and Nolan Shaffer won at No. 3 doubles (6-1, 7-5), and Lincoln Babcock and Cam Marazita defeated Braden Farmer and Lincoln Freudenburg at No. 4 doubles (6-3, 6-2).

Edwardsburg's No. 1 doubles team of Brandon Van Overberghe and Keston Mcguire defeated Brady Bosch and Maddox Carpenter 6-4, 6-2.

Edwardsburg volleyball sweeps Three Rivers

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

EDWARDSBURG — The Edwardsburg volleyball team swept Three Rivers in three sets on Thursday, improving their overall record to 25-8 and remaining perfect in conference play at 5-0. The set scores were 25-19, 25-15, 25-8.

Sarah Pippin led the offense with 17 kills, 12 digs, two aces, and one block. Ella Laskowski was a strong contributor with 13 kills and five digs while Mya Eberlein recorded 11 kills, two blocks, and one ace. Rylie Rosenkrantz directed the attack with 36 assists and added seven digs. She also recorded one block and one ace.

The defense was anchored by Sophie Kuntz, who posted 15 digs and led the team with five aces. Shelby Laubach provided net defense with three blocks and added two kills.

Eddies sweep Lakeshore

The Edwardsburg volleyball team swept Lakeshore in three sets on Monday. The set scores were 25-21, 25-18, and 25-21.

Sarah Pippin led the Eddies' attack with 22 kills, six digs, one block, and one ace. Ella Laskowski contributed 10 kills and two digs while Mya Eberlein added nine kills and one block. Shelby Laubach also had four kills.

Rylie Rosenkrantz directed the offense with 37 assists, chipping in nine digs. The defense was also supported by Sophie Kuntz (six digs) and Kya Shier (five digs).

No. 21 Notre Dame downs Boise State 28-7

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — The No. 21 Notre Dame Fighting Irish defeated the Boise State Broncos 28-7 on Saturday. The victory, which marked the first time the two teams have ever played, improved the Irish's record to 3-2.

The Irish victory was driven by a strong rushing attack and a dominant defensive effort that forced four turnovers. Quarterback CJ Carr completed 15 of 23 passes for 189 yards and threw touchdown passes to Will Pauling and Malachi Fields.

The Irish offense rushed for a total of 200 yards. Running back Jeremiyah Love gained 103 yards and scored a 4-yard touchdown run. Jadarian Price added 83 rushing yards, highlighted by a 49-yard touchdown run in the fourth quarter that sealed the victory.

The Notre Dame defense intercepted Boise State quarterback Maddux Madsen four times. Leonard Moore led the turnover effort with two interceptions in his return from injury. Tae Johnson and Luke Talich each added one interception. Boise State's lone touchdown came on a 1-yard run by Madsen in the second quarter.

Despite a high number of penalties for both teams – Notre Dame committed 11 for 112 yards and Boise State committed 13 for 112 yards – the Irish controlled the game with a plus-four turnover margin.

RANGERS

From page B1

Cassopolis receives a 1-0 forfeit this week improving the Rangers' overall record to 2-5. So instead of lacing up the cleats on Friday night, Lee and his squad will attend the Hartford at Centreville game together as a team.

Centreville (2-4) visits Cassopolis in Week 8. In week 9, Cassopolis, a member of the Southwest 10 Conference, will face a to-be determined foe from the Big 8 in a cross-over game.

"We will continue to practice as normal the rest of the week and then attend Centreville's home game with Hartford on Friday," Lee said.

Despite his team's losing record, Lee continues to see tremendous improvement every day in practice and each game. Besides this week's forfeit win, Cassopolis' other win came in the second week over Comstock 41-12.

Back-to-back losses the past couple weeks on the road at Decatur (38-7) and a heartbreaking 29-28 loss in Hartford were both contests that Lee contends that his squad learned a great deal from. Had those two contests went in Cassopolis' favor, the Rangers very well could've been in the hunt for a playoff spot. Instead Lee says his squad will use those two contests as a springboard to finish this season strong leading into the offseason and the 2026 campaign.

"Our team is progressing very well, especially since the second half of the Decatur game. We feel like our younger kids are starting to figure things out more," Lee said.

Cassopolis' coach felt the Rangers best half of football this season was the first two quarters against the Huskies.

"We played a great first half of football, but our youth and inexperience really showed up in the second half and we just weren't able to close that one out," Lee said.

The Rangers' head mentor pointed to defense, especially tackling as one of the biggest areas of improvement so far this fall.

"Our kids have taken a huge leap the last couple of weeks, especially. We have guys who are starting to record double-digit numbers in tackle totals.

Leading that charge are Cassopolis' trio of linebackers in junior Elijah Wagner, along with junior Lance Leach and Easton Mitchell, along with Tyson West. Wagoner leads the Rangers in tackles with 63, while Leach has amassed 49.

Tyson West, along with offensive lineman and defensive end Colt Dement as two players who have turned the corner in their development on defense for the Rangers.

Junior quarterback Lucas Williams continues to be the brightest sparkplug offensively. Lee describes that situation as both positive and negative.

"Lucas is doing a great job, but we need other guys to step up and handle some of the offensive load. Right now we are way too one-dimensional on that side of the football," Lee said.

The 6-foot-0, 185-pound Williams has been a force all season with his arm and legs. Williams has completed 56-of-110 passes for 1,179 yards and 13 touchdowns. He also leads all rushers on the team with 71 carries worth 512 yards.

"Opposing teams are starting to really key on Lucas so it's important that we get our running game going here near the end of the season," Lee said.

Cassopolis' head coach still identifies the Rangers' offensive line as a work in progress.

"We are still moving pieces around to find the right combination. We have a lot of sophomores in some of those positions," Lee said.

Among Williams' top pass catchers are sophomore wide receiver Mason Nelson with 16 receptions worth 401 yards and three TDs. Senior Jaylen Pratt has 11 receptions for 322 yards and five TDs, while his sophomore brother Jamiere Pratt has 16 catches for 307 yards and three TDs.

With the playoffs out of the picture, the Rangers' have redefined their goals.

"We really felt like we could win our last three games and our goal is to finish out the schedule on a strong note. We really feel like Centreville is a winnable game and then we will see who we play in the cross-over game," Lee said.

Cassopolis' head coach has been impressed with the Rangers' resiliency.

"Our kids continue to show up everyday and work hard in giving me everything they've got," Lee said.

Injuries have been minimal for Cassopolis this spring.

"We've been fairly healthy and blessed to have avoided many injuries."

SHAMROCKS

From page B1

With just two seconds left in the half and Berrien Springs facing 4th-and-goal from the Dowagiac 10, Hurst found Louis Rome open in the end zone for a touchdown. Hurst then ran in the two-point conversion, cutting all the way back from one sideline to the other to make it 14-0 at halftime.

"That's massive, but that comes down to focus," Davis said. "We weren't focused. We're down there in man coverage, and we've got a guy that just leaves (Rome) running across the field. It's frustrating.

Hurst finished with 16 carries for 118 yards, including a 6-yard touchdown run for the only scoring of the second half. He also finished 12-for-26 passing for 91 yards.

"We didn't always hit everything, sometimes the throws weren't where they needed to be," Iliff said. "But with (Hurst) off schedule, both throwing it and running it, more times than not it's going to be good. It's hard to prepare for for defenses, it's kind of an X-factor situation we have."

Dowagiac totaled 216 yards of offense, but the Chieftains couldn't turn it into points. After Hurst's scoring run made it 21-0 with 3:43 left in the third quarter, Cameron White broke free for a 59-yard run, but lost the ball at the end of it and the Shamrocks recovered.

Dowagiac again moved into Berrien Springs territory on its next possession, but Sinzcere Crowley forced a fumble on a sack and Darrin O'Dell recovered for the Shamrocks, helping to secure a shutout against a team that came in averaging 46 points per game.

"They just played their hearts out," Iliff said. "We knew it was going to be physical. Dowagiac's always physical, they play tough, they play hard, they're a good football team. We had to rise to the challenge, and our guys kept responding every time."

Dowagiac faced Buchanan Friday in its final Lakeland Conference game. Visit heraldpalladium.com/leaderpub for a recap of the game.

BERRIEN SPRINGS 21, DOWAGIAC 0

B. Springs	**6**	**8**	**7**	**0**	**—**	**21**
Dowagiac	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**—**	**0**

First quarter
B – Travonn Williams 12 run (pass failed), 7:42.
Second quarter
B – Louis Rome 10 pass from Braelin Hurst (Hurst run), 0:00.
Third quarter
B – Hurst 6 run (Hurst kick), 3:43.
Records – Berrien Springs 1-1 Lakeland, 4-1; Dowagiac 1-1, 4-2.

Contact: bsanders@TheHP.com, 429-1294, Twitter: @HPBenSanders

Classifieds Marketplace

Niles, Niles Charter, Buchanan, Edwardsburg, Cassopolis, Dowagiac, Sister Lakes and the surrounding areas

25 N. 2nd St., Niles, MI 49120
(269) 429-1396

LeaderPub.com
legals@pmginmi.com
classified@heraldpalladium.com

0200 EMPLOYMENT

Fontijne Grotnes, Inc. (DBA: Grotnes) Seeks a Senior Controls Engineer to implement and make recommendations for system level enhancements to eliminate potential problems; Modify and repair electronics equipment to ensure proper functioning; Assemble and test the suitability of components for deployments and analyze plant processes. Requirement: Bachelor's degree in Electronics Engineering, knowledge of PLC and HMI systems for Siemens, Allen Bradley, and 24 months of prior experience as Control Engineer. This position requires 25% to 30% domestic and international travels to client sites. Resumes attn: Michael A. Walker, 30257 Redfield St. Niles, MI 49120

0500 MERCHANDISE

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0600 REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

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Looking for large storage space in Niles or Buchanan area. All items are clean, no junk. Call (269) 262-0162

0900 LEGALS

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
BERRIEN COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO.
2025-0702-DE-J

Court address
811 Port Street, St Joseph, Michigan 49085 Court
telephone no.
269.983.7111

Estate of:
Harriet Diana George
Date of birth:* 05/27/1958

TO ALL CREDITORS:**

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Harriet Diana George, died 09/18/2022. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Christinalynn George, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 811 Port Street, St Joseph, Michigan 49085 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

10/6/2025
Date

Brian M. Holt P64659
Attorney name Bar no.
210 E. Main St, Ste 85
Address
Niles, Michigan 49120
City, state, zip
269.262.1984
Telephone no.

Christinalynn George
Personal representative name
5676 S 500 W-57
Address
Columbia City, Indiana 46725
City, state, zip
574.306.8518
Telephone no.

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
BERRIEN COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2025-0763-DE-R

Court address:
811 Port Street, St. Joseph, Michigan 49085
Court phone no.
269-983-7111

Estate of Patsy Jean Brcka, deceased
Date of birth: 02/28/1951

TO ALL CREDITORS: **

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Patsy Jean Brcka, died 06/18/2025. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Wade A. Brcka personal representative, or to both the probate court at 811 Port Street, St. Joseph, Michigan 49085 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date: 10/07/2025

Attorney: John R. Colip
Bar no. P25250
12 Longmeadow Village Drive, Suite 100
Niles, MI 49120
269-591-6915

Wade A. Brcka
Personal representative(s)
258 E. Elm Valley Road
Buchanan, MI 49107
269-753-2791

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
CASS COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO.
25-206-DE
JUDGE
Hon. Carol M. Bealor P57068

Estate of:
Creed B. England
Date of birth: 06/26/1980

TO ALL CREDITORS: *

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Creed B. England, died 04/05/2025. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Kennedy England, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M62 St. 10, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date October 1, 2025

Rhoades McKee
Kathleen H. Aguilar P75120
Attorney name Bar no.
55 Campau Ave, NW Ste 300
Address
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
City, state, zip
616-235-3500
Telephone

Kennedy England
Personal representative
3414 Impala Drive
Address
Brownsville, TX 78521
City, state, zip
956-407-3741
Telephone

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
COUNTY OF CASS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO.
2025-253-DE
JUDGE
Hon. Carol M. Bealor

Law & Courts building
60296 M-62, Ste 10, Cassopolis, MI 49031
Telephone no.
269-445-4454

Estate of: Thomas Aloysius McGann
Date of birth: 11/24/1937

TO ALL CREDITORS: *

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Thomas Aloysius McGann, died July 10, 2025. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to, Michael T. McGann, personal representative, or to both the probate court at Law & Courts building 60296 M-62, Ste 10, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date 10/01/2025

Thomas J. Walz P79360
Attorney name Bar No.
509 W. Washington St.
Address
South Bend, IN 46601
City, State, Zip
574-232-5988
Telephone no.

Michael T. McGann
Personal representative
17461 Woodhurst Road
Address
Granger, IN 46530
City, state, zip
574-514-8570
Telephone

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
COUNTY OF Cass

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2025-264-DE
Hon. Carol M. Bealor

Estate of: David Craig Ausra
Date of birth: 09/05/1951

TO ALL CREDITORS: *

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, David Craig Ausra, died 09/17/2025. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Milford M. Keene, II, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M-62, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date 10/03/2025

Heidi A. Duncan P76168
Attorney name Bar no.
107 Pennsylvania Ave
Address
Dowagiac, MI 49047
City, State, Zip
269-782-9895
Telephone no.

Milford M. Keene, II
Personal representative
193 Park Forest Drive N
Address
Whitland, IN 46184
City, state, zip
317-361-7653
Telephone

STATE OF MICHIGAN
IN THE 2nd JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
FOR THE COUNTY OF BERRIEN
CIVIL DIVISION

KATHY KESSINGER
Plaintiff,
v.
GREENTREE ACCEPTANCE CO, INC.
Defendant.

FILE NO. 2023-0210-CH
HON. CHARLES T. LASATA

HEIDI A. DUNCAN (P76168)
DUNCAN & ASSOCIATES, PLLC
Attorney for Plaintiff
107 Pennsylvania Ave.
Dowagiac, MI 49047
(269) 782-9895

GREENTREE ACCEPTANCE CO, INC. and/or Assignee or Agent
Self-Represented Defendant
2505 East Paris SE Ste 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

NOTICE OF HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a hearing on Defendant's Motion for the Entry of Default Order Declaring Ownership of Manufactured/Mobile Home is scheduled to be heard in this matter on **Monday, November 3, 2025, at 3:30 p.m.** or as soon thereafter as may be heard before the Honorable Charles T. LaSata with all attorneys and parties participating in person at the Berrien County Courthouse, 811 Port St., Third Floor, Room 316, St. Joseph, MI 49085.

Dated: September 9, 2025

Heidi A. Duncan (P76168)
Attorney for Plaintiff

SILVER CREEK TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 10, 2025
MEETING SUMMARY
Meeting called to order at 6:33pm Pledge of Allegiance recited
Roll Call: Present (4) Supervisor Braman, Clerk Honn, Treasurer Behnke, Trustee Stockwell Absent (1) Nick Barnes
Public Comment was open at 6:34pm, comments were heard; closed at 6:55pm
Approval of Agenda & Minutes carried.
Approval of Bills & Claims in the total amount of $ 131,928.89 carried.
REPORTS & UPDATES were received from Police, Fire, and various commissions and boards.
DISCUSSIONS of the following topics occurred: Private Cemeteries, Russom Park Master Plan Request, Letters of Resignation, Fall Quotes needed, Rate of pay for STR field work & enforcement.
NEW BUSINESS- Motions CARRIED for the following:
Approval of L-4029 at 3.6348 mills
Approval of Sewer Arrears to be added to Winter Tax Bills: SLAUA not to exceed $44,039.42; and ILS not to exceed $26,034.34
Approval of the Appointments to the following Boards:
Russum Park – Jessica Honn
Sister Lakes Area Utility Authority – Nick Lindenmulder
Planning Commission – Nick Lindenmulder
BOARD COMMENT – Honn explained that Semco Energy reached out about an easement, and it would be discussed at the SLAUA Board meeting the next day, but that it would come back to the Township for a decision.
Meeting adjourned at 7:54pm.

Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM on NOVEMBER 12, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Anthony L. May, a man, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for United Federal Credit Union, Mortgagee, dated December 13, 2021, and recorded December 27, 2021, in Liber 1209, Page 2006 Cass County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by Nationstar Mortgage LLC, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Two Hundred One Thousand Four Hundred Forty-Six and 13/100 Dollars ($201,446.13).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Cass County, Michigan at 10:00 AM on NOVEMBER 12, 2025.
Said premises are located in the Township of HOWARD, Cass County Michigan, and are described as:
Lot(s) 21 of YANKEE HEIGHTS according to the plat thereof recorded in Liber 1 of Plats, Page 153 of Cass County Records.
2560 Gilbert Avenue, Niles, Michigan 49120
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: October 11, 2025
File No. 25-006597
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400
(10-11)(11-01)

PUBLIC NOTICE
Cass County Conservation District Board of Directors Election
To all residents of the Cass County Conservation District, notice is hereby given that on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, between the hours of 5pm-7pm the District Board of Directors Election will be held.
The election is being held to fill two (2) 4-year term Board of Director positions (Terms are not limited; Board positions are 4-year terms). Candidates include Lois Koel (incumbent), Cindra Mikel, and Kenneth Chemers.
The election will be conducted during the District Annual Meeting being held on December 2, 2025, from 5 pm-8 pm at the Pokagon Band Community Center, 27043 Potawatomi Trail, Dowagiac, MI 49047 west of Dailey Road. The Annual Meeting will feature presentations with a focus on regenerative agriculture this year, a regional Conservation Districts update, the annual conservation awards ceremony, information booths on conservation related programs/services, dinner, and election voting along with the District annual report.
Voting is open to Cass County residents only. Absentee ballots are available at the Conservation District normally located at 1127 E. State St., Cassopolis, MI weekdays 8:00am-4:30pm except Federal Holidays. Eligible voters are individuals, at least 18 years of age, who live within the district boundary (Cass County, MI) and can verify their current address and age by one piece of identification which proves residency. For more information call (269) 445-8641 extension 5 or text 269-845-8393.
This notice is published at least forty-five (45) days prior to the date of the Election as required by Conservation District Law. Cass County Conservation District is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.
Byron "Burne" Miller
Board of Directors Chair Cass County Conservation District

PUBLIC NOTICE
CITY OF DOWAGIAC

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Public Accuracy Test for the November 4, 2025, City General Election has been scheduled for

2:00p.m., October 17, 2024
in the Dowagiac City Hall located at 241 S. Front Street, Dowagiac, Michigan, 49047.

The Public Accuracy Test is conducted to demonstrate that the program and computer that will be used to tabulate the results of the election, counts the votes in the manner prescribed by law.

Patty Patano, City Clerk
Dowagiac City Clerk

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
The Niles Housing Commission has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the performance of audit services in the operation of its public housing authority facilities located in the City of Niles, Michigan. All proposals in response to the RFP must be submitted in the format specified in the RFP, which can be downloaded from the City of Niles website at www.nilesmi.org under the "Frequently Requested" tab. Proposals must be submitted on or before October 17, 2025 in accordance with the RFP instructions.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
The Niles Housing Commission has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the performance of management services in the operation of Its public housing authority facilities located in the City of Niles, Michigan. All proposals in response to the RFP must be submitted in the format specified in the RFP, which can be downloaded from the City of Niles website at www.nilesmi.org under the "Frequently Requested" tab. Proposals must be submitted on or before October 17, 2025 in accordance with the RFP instructions.

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on November 5, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information: Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Brittany Crane, an unmarried woman Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Freedom Mortgage Corporation
Date of Mortgage: November 22, 2024
Date of Mortgage Recording: December 2, 2024
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $116,296.50
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Village of Cassopolis, Cass County, Michigan, and described as: Commencing on the Northeast corner of Lot Number 12, Block 3 South, Range 4 East, Altered Plat of the Village of Cassopolis, according to the recorded plat thereof, thence running South along the East line of said Lot Number 12, 3 1/2 rods; thence running West 6 rods, more or less, to the East line of property formerly owned by Henry Klinkman; thence running North on the East line of said Henry Klinkman's property to the North line of Lot Number 11 in said Block and Range; thence running East along the North line of said Lots Numbered 11 and 12 to the place of beginning.
Common street address (if any): 324 S East St, Cassopolis, MI 49031-1204
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16). If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: October 4, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
1572952 (248) 642-2515
(10-04)(10-25)

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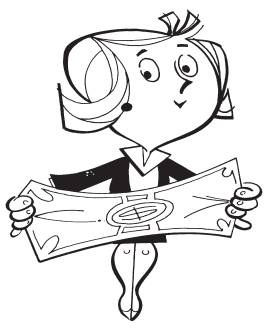

IN THE CLASSIFIEDS TODAY!

NOTICE OF CITY GENERAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2025 CITY OF DOWAGIAC

TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF THE CITY OF DOWAGIAC:

CLERK HOURS ARE:
Wednesdays: 1:00 TO 3:00 PM
Thursdays: 1:00 TO 3:00 PM

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT AN ELECTION WILL BE HELD IN THE CITY OF DOWAGIAC ON TUESDAY, November 4, 2025. THE POLLS WILL OPEN AT 7:00 AM UNTIL 8:00 PM

WARD 1
Snow Building, Community Center
302 S. Front Street

WARD 2
COA – Front Street
227 S. Front St.

WARD 3
CITY HALL
241 S. Front St., 2nd Floor.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE of the following:
City General Election for the purpose of election of local offices and to vote on proposals:

Local offices
Mayor -
Don Lyons
Patrick Bakeman

Treasurer -

Councilman – Ward 1	Councilman – Ward 2	Councilman – Ward 3
Tharan K. Suvarna	Laura Desilets	Breanna Bundy
		Justin Doyle

Proposals
County: Medical Care Facility Millage Renewal Proposal
MEDICAL CARE FACILITY
County of Cass Medical Care Facility Millage Renewal .4881mills for 10 years.
Full text of the ballot proposition may be obtained at the Cass County Clerk's Office, 120 N. Broadway, Cassopolis MI 49031; Telephone (269) 445-4464.
Local School District – Dowagiac Union School District Sinking Fund Millage Proposal

DOWAGIAC SCHOOLS
DOWAGIAC UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT SINKING FUND MILLAGE PROPOSAL .5 MILL FOR 10 YEARS

Full text of the ballot proposition may be obtained at the administrative offices of Dowagiac Union School District, 243 S. Front Street, Dowagiac, Michigan 49047-1738, telephone: (269) 782-4400

Patty Patano, City Clerk
City of Dowagiac 241 S. Front Street, Dowagiac, MI 49047
269-783-2502

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GIVE US A CALL AND SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT

Notice is given under Section 3212 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the Circuit Court in Cass County, Law and Courts Building 60296 M-62 Cassopolis, MI 49031 starting promptly at **10:00 a.m., Wednesday October 22, 2025.** The amount due on the Mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.

Default has been made in the conditions of a Mortgage by Dale A. Wetzel, the original mortgagor, to Honor Credit Union, Mortgagee, dated July 21, 2023, and recorded on August 04, 2023, in Liber 1235 on Page 1550, in Cass County, Michigan Records, on which Mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of $55,896.81, including interest at 7.25% per annum. Said premises is situated in the County of Cass, State of Michigan, and described as:

Real Estate Located in the Township of Pokagon, County of Cass, State of Michigan and described as:
Lot Three (3), and the West One- Half of Lot Two (2), Block Eleven (11), Village of Summerville, Pokagon Township, Cass County, Michigan, according to the Plat
thereof, recorded at Liber A of Mortgages, Page 190, on August 22, 1836.
TAX ID: 14-110-140-113-00
Commonly known as: 33037 Pokagon Hwy, Niles, Michigan 49120

The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.

ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this Notice.

THIS FIRM IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

Date: September 16, 2025

For more information, please call:
HONOR CREDIT UNION
Mark D. Hofstee (P66001)
Bolhouse, Hofstee & McLean, P.C.
Grandville State Bank Building
3996 Chicago Dr SW, Grandville MI 49418-1384

Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM on NOVEMBER 19, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Michael Antisdel and Sherry Antisdel, husband and wife, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for First NLC Financial Services, LLC, Mortgagee, dated November 16, 2006, and recorded December 15, 2006, in Liber 950, Page 1099 Cass County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by Deutsche Bank National Trust Company, as Trustee, in trust for the registered holders of Morgan Stanley Home Equity Loan Trust 2007-2, Mortgage Pass-Through Certificates, Series 2007-2, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Ninety-Seven Thousand Seven Hundred Eleven and 60/100 Dollars ($97,711.60).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Cass County, Michigan at 10:00 AM on NOVEMBER 19, 2025.
Said premises are located in the Township of Howard, Cass County Michigan, and are described as:
Parcel 1: Commencing on the East Line of Thomson Road 975 feet North and 33 feet East of the Southwest corner of the East 1/2 of the Southeast 1/4; thence East 298.61 feet; thence North 75 feet West 298.50 feet; thence South 75 feet to the beginning. Parcel 2: Commencing on the East line of Thomson Road 900 feet North and 33 feet East of the Southwest corner of the East 1/2 of the Southeast 1/4; thence East 628.52 feet; thence North 150 feet; thence West 329.80 feet; thence South 75 feet; thence West 298.61 feet; thence South 75 feet to beginning.
1235 Thomson Road, Niles, Michigan 49120.
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: October 4, 2025
File No. 25-012467
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400
(10-04)(10-25)

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Please call 269-429-1877 for more information.

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, Michigan starting promptly at 10:00 a.m. on November 5, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Mortgage (the "Mortgage") made by Patrick J. Brodzinski, a single man, as Mortgagor to First Federal Savings Bank, with its address at 301 East Ninth Street, Rochester, IN, 46975-0527 as Mortgagee, dated February 13, 2009, and recorded February 24, 2009, Liber 989, Page 2381, Cass County Records, Cass County, Michigan. The balance owing on the Mortgage is $47,662.36 at the time of this Notice. The Mortgage contains a power of sale and no suit or proceeding at law or in equity has been instituted to recover the debt secured by the Mortgage, or any part of the Mortgage. TAKE NOTICE that on Wednesday, November 5, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. local time, or any adjourned date thereafter, the Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale at public auction to the highest bidder, at the Cass County Courthouse located at 60296 M 62, Cassopolis, Michigan. The Mortgagee will apply the sale proceeds to the debt secured by the Mortgage as stated above, plus interest on the amount due at the fixed rate of 5%per annum; all legal costs and expenses, including attorney fees allowed by law; and also any amount paid by the Mortgagee to protect its interest in the property. The property to be sold at foreclosure is all of that real estate situated in Milton Township, County of Cass, State of Michigan, described as: LOT NUMBERED FIVE (5), DUNNING ACRES, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF, AS RECORDED IN LIBER 16 OF PLATS, PAGE 333, CASS COUNTY RECORDS. PATRICK J. BRODZINSKI AND PATRICK JOHN BRODZINSKI ARE ONE AND THE SAME PERSON. Parcel No. 14-070-300-005-00 Commonly known address: 29154 E. US 12, Niles, Michigan 49120 The redemption period shall be one (1) year from the date of sale pursuant to MCLA 600.3240(12), unless deemed abandoned and then pursuant to the time frames provided for in MCL 600.3241a. Pursuant to MCL 600.3278, Mortgagor will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. September 15, 2025 First Federal Savings Bank PLUNKETT COONEY KELLI L. BAKER (P49960) Attorney for Mortgagee 333 Bridge Street NW, Suite 530 Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504 (616) 752-4624
(09-27)(10-25)

FORECLOSURE NOTICE (ALL COUNTIES) AS A DEBT COLLECTOR, WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: IF YOU ARE A MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER ON ACTIVE DUTY, IF YOUR PERIOD OF ACTIVE DUTY HAS CONCLUDED LESS THAN 90 DAYS AGO, OR IF YOU HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO ACTIVE DUTY, PLEASE CONTACT THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PARTY FORECLOSING THE MORTGAGE AT THE TELEPHONE NUMBER STATED IN THIS NOTICE. Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement – Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM a.m./p.m. on October 22, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default having been made in the terms and conditions of a certain mortgage made by Samuel L. Butler and Brenda Butler of Cass County, Michigan, Mortgagor to Fifth Third Bank (Western Michigan) dated the 7th day of February, 2005, and recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds, for the County of Cass and State of Michigan, on the 4th day of March, 2005, Liber 00905, Page 0596, of the Cass County Records on which mortgage there is claimed to be due, at the date of this notice, for principal of $127,657.11 plus accrued interest at 8.00000% percent per annum. Which said premises are described as follows: All that certain piece or parcel of land situated in the Township of Volinia, in the County of Cass and State of Michigan and described as follows to wit: Part of the Northwest fractional Quarter of Section 19, Town 5 South, Range 14 West, described as commencing at the North Quarter post of said Section; thence West along the North line of said Section 493.66 feet to the Point of Beginning of the land herein described; thence South at right angles to the North line, 600.00 feet; thence West parallel with the North line of said Section, +/- 160 feet to the West line of the East half of the Northeast Quarter of said Northwest Quarter; thence Northerly along said West line +/- 600 feet to the North line of said Section 19; thence East along said North line, 160.00 feet to the Place of Beginning. ALSO, the East half of the Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 19, Town 5 South, Range 14 West. More correctly described as: The East half of the Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 19, Town 5 South, Range 14 West. Commonly known as: 21515 Crane Street, Dowagiac, MI 49047 Tax ID: 14-140-019-007-02 and 14-140-019-007-11 If the property is sold at a foreclosure sale the borrower, pursuant to MCLA 600.3278 will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. The redemption period shall be six months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. Dated: September 20, 2025, By: Benjamin N. Hoen #P-81415 Weltman, Weinberg & Reis Co., L.P.A. 5990 West Creek Road, Suite 200 Independence, OH 44131 Telephone: 216-739-5100 Fax: 216-363-4034 Email: bhoen@weltman.com WWR# 25-000793-1
(09-20)(10-11)

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Monday, October 27th 1-3PM
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NOTICE OF REGISTRATION FOR THE SPECIAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2025, TOWNSHIP OF SILVER CREEK, MICHIGAN

TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF SILVER CREEK TOWNSHIP:
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that any qualified elector of Silver Creek Township who is not already registered may register at the office of the Township Clerk, the office of the County Clerk, a Secretary of State branch office, or other designated state agency. Registration forms can be obtained at mi.gov/vote and mailed to the Township Clerk. Voters who have already registered may update their registration at www.expressSOS.com
The last day to register in any manner other than in person with the local clerk is Monday, October 20th, 2025. After this date, anyone who qualifies as an elector may register to vote in person with proof of residency (MCL 168.497) at the Clerk's Office located at the Township Hall, 32764 Dixon St, Dowagiac, MI 49047 at the following times:
- **Regular Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 9 AM to 3 PM**
- **Mondays & Wednesdays by appointment only**
- **Saturday, November 1st, 2025, from 8 AM to 4 PM**
- **Election Day, Tuesday November 4th from 7 AM to 8 PM**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A SPECIAL ELECTION WILL BE HELD IN THE TOWNSHIP OF SILVER CREEK, COUNTY OF CASS, ON TUESDAY NOVEMBER 4, 2025. THE POLLS WILL OPEN AT 7:00 AM AND CLOSE AT 8:00 PM. LOCATION:
SILVER CREEK TOWNSHIP HALL
32764 DIXON STREET, DOWAGIAC, MI 49047
Please see Notice of Election for Proposals Persons with special needs, as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act, should contact the Township Clerk. Absentee ballots may be obtained from the local Clerk.
FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
https://silvercreektwpmi.gov/election-information/
Jessica Honn, Silver Creek Township Clerk, (269) 424-3025 x4

Economy Storage, 2206 Yankee Street, Niles, MI 49120. Auction Saturday October 25, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Unit # Name	
10 Charmin Kelly	**330** Sheila Kollars
28 Emalee Anderson	**331** Valerie Outlaw
56 Nathan Thomas	**342** Terrence Moss
57 Caleb Dubik	**346** DaMonica Williams
67 Jerome Jankowiak	**351** Lyman Bybie
77 Stoney Tittle	**356** Chase Molica
82 Erica Pitone	**362** Chris Williams
116 Melissa Kaeding	**386** Shannon Lego
119 Kyle Tracey	**389** Parnell Jenkins
148 Gloster Johnson	**399** Les Hart
151 Christopher Albright	**410/534** Rebecca Coleman
152 Lorene Maynard	**429** Aaron Haynes
164 Brady Hattenback	**432** Mare Williams
168 Gene Robertson	**438** Adrianna Affriso
173 George Tovey III	**442** Dawn Hojara
177 Larry Wegrecki	**451** Jean Fitch
183 Cindy Fisher	**452** Tyler Mahar
184/66 Mary Anderson	**518** Dawn Lintz
191 Alan Smith	**529** Shannon Brown
192 Patricia Yoder	**530** Justin Landis
196 Colton Wedgworth	**541** Nicole Hurt
205 Nancy Bombrys	**605** Michael Lewark
228/367 Shawnette Booker	**606** Zoltan Kovach
273 Tony Pompey	**638** Britney Stanczyk
278 Chelsie Carlyle	**665** Rodney Prescott
284 Kathleen Peterson	**677/567** Julie Potate

Niles U-Stor-It, 1314 E. Main Street, Niles, MI 49120. Auction Saturday October 25, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.

23 Miranda Wendzel **57** Nathan Haynes **54** Cynthia Swisher

J & J Storage, 2220 S. 13th Street and 2627 S. 11th Street, Niles, MI 49120. Auction Saturday October 25, 2025, at 11:00 a.m.

57 James Colburn	**263** Tamara Holmes
69 Leanne Matheson	**292** The Woodshed Crafts
97 Blake King	**346** Joe Jones
233A Donna Lawton	**373** Rhonda Sue Outlaw
311A Michael Tapia	**377** Christy Stevens
188 Michael Fedore	**426** James Schilling Jr.
230 Felisha Liberty	**481** Natosha Libertowski
238/466 James Diss	**483** Michael Donoho
250 Robert Clayton/Jessica Vissik	

OUTDOORS

Photos by Ryan Yuenger / HP correspondent

Madeline Bertrand County Park offers 18 holes of scenic, wooded disc golf near the Michigan-Indiana border.

Spinning discs at 'Mad Bert'

Southern Berrien has a gem of a disc golf course at Madeline Bertrand

Madeline Bertrand County Park is the ideal setting for a fall disc golf hike.

In my last column, I wrote about how I got back into playing disc golf this summer, and asked readers for suggestions of which southwest Michigan course I should play next.

Several of you reached out after the story was published, making a case for your favorite course in the area.

Ryan Yuenger

I plan on playing all the recommended courses, but my first choice was made after reading a convincing email from former Berrien County Park Operations Manager Mark Huebner. It read:

In my opinion, the best disc golf course in Michiana is at Madeline Bertrand County Park in Niles. The course is cut through an old scotch pine plantation and deciduous forest along the state line. It's a very tight and challenging track.

I must admit that I'm a bit prejudiced when it comes to the Madeline Bertrand course. While working for Berrien County Parks, myself, a half dozen jail inmates and an excavating contractor built this course. Prior to construction, Parks staff had the pleasure of walking the property and laying out each hole with Ed Headrick. Mr. Headrick was the inventor of the modern day frisbee and disc golf.

This description, coupled with the fact that Niles' Leader Publications is now part of our Paxton Media Group family, was a perfect reason for me to visit Madeline Bertrand County Park – "Mad-Bert," as Huebner called it – for a round of disc golf on an unseasonably warm Saturday in October.

The course

In my past experience, playing disc golf was never just about the beautiful scenery or the challenge of the course itself – the people I met while playing were always part of the fun.

This rang true once again at Madeline Bertrand.

As I was getting ready to tee off on the first hole, a nice local fellow named Beau introduced himself and offered to play with me. He had just finished playing 18 holes and was trying to get in a few more before heading home for the day.

Beau immediately complimented the music coming from my bluetooth speaker – a surefire way to win me over. For those keeping score, I was playing Blockhead's 2024 album *Mortality Is Lit!*. Check it out.

Beau kindly offered advice on how to attack each hole we played, which was much needed – this course consists of many narrow, tree lined holes with several pins you can't see from the tee pad. Most shots require accuracy, and stray throws can land your disc deep in the brush or at the base of the tree you just dented.

Overall, the course was ideal – it's both picturesque and offers good, challenging disc golf holes. It has clear signage, well-defined fairways and high-quality Mach 7 disc golf baskets. Trees have been trimmed to make the course more playable, and there are many wooden steps built into the ground to make some of the steeper hills easier to navigate.

While the park does run along the banks of the St. Joseph River, there is no water or other hazards to worry about during the round. On a rainy day, things might get a little muddy, however.

Several large black walnut trees on the course made for a frenzy of squirrel and chipmunk activity, with the occasional falling nut also keeping me on my toes. As I made my way through the course for a second time, I even had a staring contest with a family of white-tailed deer.

Fall colors are starting to sweep into the park, providing 360-degree panoramic forest views at every turn. It's hard to even keep score with so many natural delights around.

There are miles of biking and hiking trails throughout the park, including several points where the disc golf course and trails meet. I almost learned this the hard way when a bicyclist came riding near the path of my disc on one of the holes.

I couldn't have asked for a better fall afternoon, or a better guide than Beau to show me the course for the first time. I will definitely be back.

Tournament

Madeline Bertrand disc golf course is hosting a 40th anniversary tournament Saturday, Oct. 11 at 9 a.m. For more information, visit berriencounty.org.

Parking passes at the park are $3 for Berrien County residents, and $5 for non-residents. The disc golf course also charged a fee of $5.

Yearly passes are available at the visitor center, which is also fully stocked with snacks, drinks and an array of discs.

Ryan Yuenger is an HP correspondent. Send him ideas of where to take a hike or play disc golf next at ryuenger@thehp.com.

A scenic tee pad view on hole 13. Beau told me this is a signature hole on the course.

Sarett Nature Center

Sarett Nature Stewards: 2-4 p.m. each Wednesday. This program is a way to experience Sarett in a whole different way. By being a nature steward you are helping Sarett but you also gain a sense of well-being. Sarett's crew will teach you many different skills such as collecting viable seeds for future planting, how to identify invasive species from native ones, removing invasive plants, and more. For ages 10 and older.

Fall Mushrooms of Berrien County: 1-3 p.m. Oct. 11. Join mushroom enthusiast Charlie Havens on the Sarett trails for a beginner mushroom hike.

Learn safety tips, how to describe and document what you see to better identify it, recommend identification guides, and more. This program is best for people 18 and older. Call (269) 927-4832 to register. Members $10, non-members $15.

Email info for Get Outdoors to sports@TheHP.com, or call 429-1294 by Wednesday.

Swimming drone explores underwater mountain in middle of Lake Superior

By LAURA HERBERG
Bridge Michigan

Known to some as the "Freshwater Everest," if you want to explore this mountain, you don't go up, you go down.

In the middle of Lake Superior, near the boundary between Canadian and U.S. waters, sits the Superior Shoal, a mountain that's completely underwater.

The shoal is about 4 square miles of volcanic rock that rises up from the bottom of the lake to a height nearly three times that of the Statue of Liberty. Its peak wrests about 30 feet below the surface.

The shoal, a term used to describe areas of shallow water, was first charted in 1929.

Now, filmmakers and researchers are exploring it with underwater drones. They want to see if it's a hotbed for aquatic life that could offer a refuge for species facing obstacles elsewhere in the Great Lakes.

"This is an area that has very, very rarely been explored on camera," said Zach Melnick, a cofounder of Inspired Planet Productions, which he runs with his business partner and wife, Yvonne Drebert.

It's not the only underwater incline in the Great Lakes. Others include Stannard Rock, a reef in Lake Superior north of Marquette; a knoll outside Tobermory, Ontario in Lake Huron; and Midlake Reef in Lake Michigan, between Muskegon and Milwaukee. And it's not the only "Superior Shoal." There's another located in the St. Lawrence River off the shore of New York.

But Drebert and Melnick believe the Superior Shoal in Lake Michigan is the largest known underwater mountain in fresh water.

Documenting aquatic life with a swimming robot

The filmmakers had been curious about lake protrusions after exploring one that appeared to be an outlier of aquatic life while filming their series and related documentary, "All Too Clear: Beneath the Surface of the Great Lakes." Those works dive deep into how invasive mussels in the Great Lakes are gobbling up essential nutrients and devastating organisms, from plankton to whitefish.

When a researcher they'd worked with in the past, Michael Rennie, got a grant to explore the Superior Shoal, they "sort of begged him," Melnick said, to let them come along.

Rennie is an associate professor at Lakehead University and a research fellow at the International Institute for Sustainable Development-Experimental Lakes Area. Now, with the help of the filmmakers' cameras, he's looking into whether the Superior Shoal might be a hotspot for life, which he said is often the case for similar seamounts found in the ocean.

What they're essentially studying, Rennie said, is "how the physics of having this giant mountain in a bunch of water that's swirling around all the time interacts with things like nutrients, and with the growth of algae, to promote the abundance of fish that we seem to be seeing out there."

Melnick and Drebert are operating special cinema-grade cameras to monitor aquatic life like zooplankton, algae and fish.

The drone they use is called a Boxfish Luna and it can go around 1,600 feet deep, about the length of five football fields.

"Think of aerial drones, take all that cool technology, and put it in a robot that you're shoving underwater," Drebert said. "But our drone is a little bit special because it can swim in any direction, just like a fish."

Usually, it takes a little while for fish to get used to the swimming drone, Melnick said, but fish near the Superior Shoal seemed to be curious.

"The trout out there were ultra amenable to being on camera," he said.

At one point, while the team was livestreaming video, they tried to measure fish with two laser points. The fish chased the glowing red dots the same way cats do.

They also saw hydra, which are kind of like freshwater anemones, attached to rocks, giving the effect of a garden.

"They are little tiny aquatic animals that wave in the wind," said Drebert. "They use their little hairy tentacles to pull food, like little zooplankton and critters, out of the water."

Ripe for conservation?

Rennie said the data collected on the recent trip has not been fully analyzed yet. But, if research shows that the Superior Shoal is a magnet for aquatic life, then maybe it and places like it could serve as refuges for near-shore populations dealing with environmental or human-caused problems.

Submitting hunting or fishing photos

Have a behemoth buck, a tremendous turkey or super-sized salmon?

Please submit photos to sports@TheHP.com.

Your photo must be in focus, all persons in the photo must be identified, and the general location of the hunt must be provided (for example, 10-point buck shot in Benton Township, black bear shot near Munising, Mich., etc.)

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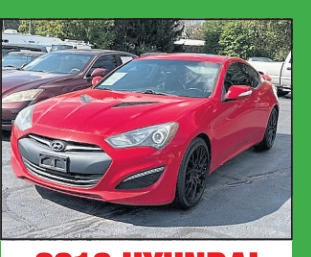

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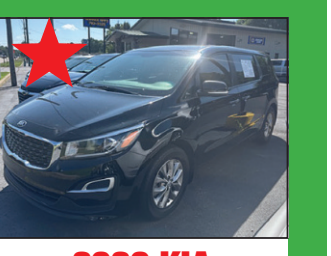

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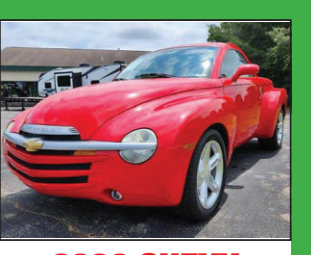

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